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Serfojee Rajah 1827

MORLAND.

THE FIRST TALE,

CONTINUED.

Ex noto fictum carmen ſequar. Hor.

My ſcenes, though feign'd, from real life I draw.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

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MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S ... TANJORE ... IAL.

THE MORLANDS.

TALES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

SIMPLE AND SURPRISING.

Ex noto fictum carmen ſequar. HOR.
My ſcenes, though feign'd, from real life I draw.

——*ex fumo dare lucem*
Cogitat, ut ſpecioſa dehinc miracula promat. HOR.
Forth from a cloud of ſmoke he breaks to light,
And pours his ſpecious miracles to ſight. FRANCIS.

By R. C. DALLAS, Eſq.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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MOR-

MORLAND.

CHAP. XVII.

Friendſhip.—An unexpected Meeting ſhakes Jones's Reſolution.—Sophia's Letter.—Morland's Advice.—He dines at Affington-Houſe.—Has two diſtinct Views of the Spires of Oxford.—Intereſts Jones for Tom Murphy, and returns to Ben's Cottage.

FRIENDSHIP is ſaid to be a plant of ſlow growth, and perhaps few are of long duration that come not gradually to perfection. It is engrafted upon wiſdom, and fenced around with good ſenſe and virtue; it owes the

balmy qualities of its fruit to culture, its ſoil is improved and enriched with unremitting care, in time the inſipidity of caution is mellowed into the ſweetneſs of confidence, and the well-rooted ſtandard defies the ſtorms of life and the attacks of time. This ſpecies is rare as well as ſlow, and there are but few who are either able or willing to attend to its cultivation. On the other hand, nature is ever making ſpontaneous efforts to produce it every where, but the variety of ſoils, left to her alone, make an ungrateful return, and the plant, luxuriant at firſt, never arrives to ſufficient ſtrength to bear fruit, or yields only poiſon. There is, however, a ſpecies of rapid growth, which, placed by Providence in a congenial ſoil, ſhoots up

up with all the luxuriancy of the latter and with all the ſtrength and balmy richneſs of the former. A turn of countenance, a ſmile, a ſentiment produces it in the hearts of unguarded youth, and it flouriſhes ſpeedily; but there is this difference between it and the friendſhip engrafted on wiſdom; it is unfenced, and its branches ſtand in the current of the paſſions; it is liable to be blighted by folly and by vice. A few, perhaps very few, eſcape and ſhoot to a height, at which no current can affect them, where they become as durable as they are perfect, and are ſo far preferable to thoſe of the cultured ſpecies, as they have been more productive.

The confidence Jones placed in me, and the tone of equality in which he ſpoke, not only gratified me, but called forth in my breaſt ſenſations half ſtifled by the degraded ſtate to which I had fallen. I felt the pride of a gentleman in being the friend of one, and even in this reſpect alone in looking back I always conſider our meeting in the alcove at Affington as one of the evidently providential events of my life. Be this as it may, let us return to the thread of my narrative.

Jones had with a religious ſincerity combated his paſſion, and if he had not eradicated it from his heart, he had at leaſt recovered that equanimity

mity which prevented its preying on his ſpirits or injuring his health, and which enabled him to convince his father that filial affection was as ſtrongly rooted in his mind as any of its emotions. Many months had paſſed ſince the departure of the object of his paſſion, and though his love remained unabated, he was heroically practiſing a conduct that might truly be called virtuous, when an unexpected incident threw him off his poiſe, and gave to his paſſion a degree of ardour higher if poſſible than ever.

He was one morning in the latter end of March preceding my arrival in Devonſhire, riding followed by a ſervant on the Newton road, and had

got as far as Hall-down, where he proceeded ſlowly, contemplating the Heaton rocks which appeared on the hills to his right, when his attention was called off from thoſe objects by a diſtant ſcream that directed his eyes to a poſt-chaiſe on the road, where he obſerved one of the horſes fallen on the ground and the boy under him. He immediately ſpurred on to give aſſiſtance: as he went up a terrified female, having opened the door, ſprung out of the carriage. The poſtboy was ſoon extricated from his dangerous poſition, and the ſtumbling horſe put upon his legs, but how was Jones ſurpriſed, when going up to the traveller he recognized in her Sophia's maid Mary. The inevitable aſſociations of paſt hours accompanied

companied the ſight of this faithful and reſpectable young woman; Sophia in all her charms, Sophia in all her ſufferings, preſented her image as ſtrongly as ever to the mind of her lover. I will not relate minutely the account of this unexpected interview as deſcribed by Jones, ſuffice it to ſay that his anxiety to obtain intelligence of Sophia led him to aſk a thouſand queſtions to little purpoſe, for the ſum of all he could prevail upon Mary to impart was, that ſhe was well, and, if not happy, ſatisfied with her ſituation. When he aſked her if ſhe was ſtill with Sophia, ſhe anſwered, "No:" but her look and heſitation betrayed the truth. He ſaw, however, the propriety of her conduct in her attempts to preſerve

the ſecret with which ſhe had been entruſted, and deſiſted from urging her to reveal it, reſolving at the ſame time to keep the chaiſe in ſight, in order to trace if poſſible the retreat of her miſtreſs, whoſe image now baniſhed all other ideas from his mind.

On putting her into the carriage he obſerved a number of boxes, with one of which he was well acquainted, and, pointing it out to her, deſired her to tell Sophia that he hoped ſhe had not forgotten him. She replied only by aſking how far it was to Exeter, and, being informed, aſſured him of her reſpect, and with her eyes full of tears bade the poſtboy make the beſt of his way. The boy, to

make

make amends for his loſt time, and to be revenged on the ſtumbling horſe, ſet off at full ſpeed, and Jones turned to mount; but neither horſe nor ſervant was near him. The ſpirited animals being left to themſelves, while their riders were engaged in aſſiſting the poſtboy, had become impatient of ſtanding ſtill, and began to walk forward; the ſervant perceiving it, crept cautiouſly up to his own, and caught his bridle ſuddenly, which ſtartled the other and ſet him off on a gallop: the man inſtantly mounted and rode after him, and Jones, left on the down by himſelf, ſaw his horſes and the chaiſe flying in oppoſite directions. He kept his eyes on the latter for a long way over the down, now and then turning to

ſee if his ſervant was coming. At length the chaiſe reaching the brow of the hill began to deſcend and was ſoon out of ſight. For ſome time he remained on the ſpot where he was left, gradually loſing his patience, which was nearly exhauſted when he perceived his man at a diſtance galloping towards him leading his horſe. Satisfied that Mary had not a mile the ſtart of him, he now recovered himſelf, being certain that he could overtake her with great eaſe in the courſe of eight miles, which was the diſtance to Exeter. Though he rode with all the ſpeed he could, and though there were many hills to retard wheels and give a horſeman additional advantage in the purſuit, he arrived at Affington without once

getting

getting a glimpſe of his object. His ſervant enquired of ſeveral perſons in the village, but no one had noticed its paſſing. He now conceived that he ſhould hear of Mary at Ex-Mount, and he haſtened on. The enquiry was as vain as it had been at Affington: the ſervant who came to the gate aſſured him that neither he nor any of his fellow ſervants knew any thing of her. He puſhed on, he might yet overtake her before ſhe reached Exeter. Every inn at Exeter was explored, but Mary was not found, nor was the chaiſe in which ſhe had rode to be heard of.

Compelled to abandon the purſuit, Jones returned home; but not the ſame Jones he had gone out. The

ſight of Mary had renewed his former trains of thought, and in ſpite of his virtues he found himſelf doomed to be miſerable without Sophia. He had all to do over again; again to combat with the ſtrongeſt emotions of the heart, and thoſe too in alliance with real virtue. From Mary's travelling in a poſt-chaiſe towards Exeter with luggage, he conceived Sophia to be in the neighbourhood: the thought haunted his imagination, and raiſed a deſire to ſee her, more powerful than he had ever felt before. I have already ſaid that his paſſions were ſtrong, and that he at times yielded to their influence. The fruitleſs ſearch after the chaiſe at Exeter had conſumed the greater part of the day, and it was too late to ex-

tend the enquiry back to Newton that evening; the next morning, however, he rofe early and rode over—Newton is about twelve miles from Affington—he might as well have ftaid at home: none of the ftable-boys in the town knew anything of the chaife defcribed, or of the boy that drove it. From this time Jones retired as often as he could with propriety to his ftudy, where he fat loft in reverie: his fpirits before his family were the effect of painful effort, nor did he always make that effort when with his fifter only. She perceived the change, and fhe afked his confidence; but this the nature of his fentiments forbade; fhe had been taught to confider Sophia's misfortune as a crime, and

Jones

Jones would ſooner have died than have attempted to counteract principles inſtilled into his ſiſter's mind by his father and mother. His ſoul laboured under its feelings: he ſought once to relieve it by communicating his thoughts to a young man whom he numbered among his friends, and accounted the moſt worthy of his confidence. On mentioning Sophia to him, however, the youth gave looſe to ſuch indecent obſervations and ſentiments, that Jones's temper was ruffled, and, breaking away abruptly, he reſolved in future to confide thoſe unhappy feelings to his own breaſt. This happened a day or two before I firſt went to Affington-Houſe, and aſſiſted to prepare that ſympathy on

the

the ſubject of friendſhip, to which his father's praiſe and my own ſentiments gave effect.

A few days after his father ſet out on his journey Jones again unexpectedly met Mary in Exeter, nearly three months after their meeting on Hall-down. He now reſolved to diſcover Sophia's retreat, or at leaſt to inform her by her maid, that it was the invariable object of his mind, and that he ſhould not be ſatisfied till he had ſucceeded. Mary liſtened to him with reſpect, and a look of concern that proved her intereſted in his behalf; and when he had done ſpeaking, ſaid that ſhe had a meſſage to deliver to him from her miſtreſs. She then told him that Sophia on hearing of

of their former meeting had charged her to avoid him; but if he met her, and endeavoured to obtain information of the place of her reſidence, to requeſt him in her name to deſiſt, and to aſſure him that ſhe would herſelf write to him on the ſubject. A letter from Sophia was a gratification only inferior to that of ſeeing her, and the promiſe of it produced an immediate acquieſcence. In conſequence he received the one I found for him in the alcove, of which the following is a copy:

"My dear friend,

"I depend upon the good ſenſe and virtues which I know you poſſeſs for the effect I propoſe in writing

writing to you. Too well convinced by the report I received from my maid, after your accidental meeting on Hall-down, that you continue to think of me in a manner injurious to your own happineſs, and deſtructive to the repoſe, which my mind, after a dreadful agitation of many bitter months, is beginning to recover, I immediately reſolved to treat you with that plainneſs and candour due to one of ſuch exalted principles, and I inſtructed Mary to inform you, if you met her again, that I would write to you.

"We were infants together, play-fellows in the early part of youth, and friends as we advanced in life; in retracing our lives, I do not re-
member

member a ſingle circumſtance that throws the ſlighteſt ſpot upon yours, but on the contrary, many, many that highly exalt you in my opinion: not only your virtues ſecured my eſteem, your manners won my affection, and, to deſcend to your perſon, I admired your countenance and form, as worthy of the mind they contained: to have known myſelf ſelected by you, would have completed that attachment which I ſhould have gloried to confeſs. Let the ſincerity of this avowal prove to you the unalterable determination of my ſoul, which has been the reſult of reflection on the degraded ſtate into which I have fallen. I am reſolved never to marry. Think not to ſhake my reſolution: if any thing could

could confirm it more than the principle on which it is taken, it would be your perfifting to think of lofing yourfelf, and mortifying your family, the remembrance of whom is dear to me beyond expreffion, by a union that never can take place, and which if it did would lead to mifery. Reflection would embitter the remainder of my life, which I have now a profpect of fpending tranquilly and rationally; and the idea of your delighting in a form that has been difhonoured, fo far from gratifying a warrantable pride, could not fail to diminifh my efteem, and, confequently, to cut off the chief fource of happinefs. But let me be more explicit; I have no longer a heart to exchange with you: mine is engaged;

gaged; it is moſt firmly, moſt fervently fixed upon an object from whom I would rather die than remove it; the only being that could have reconciled me to myſelf. Yes, my friend, I am almoſt, if not altogether, reconciled to myſelf; and would you put an end to the reconciliation? Would you deſtroy, would you weaken a foundation, on which I have begun to build a new felicity, which promiſes to exceed, far exceed that which I loſt? If ſo, examine into the nature of your love, and you will find it, however different the channel it takes, ariſing in the ſame ſource as that which cruelly ſwept away the happineſs of my family. That kind of love, and that only, I have abjured. The tender

der friendſhip I felt for you, previous to the excurſion of your family through England, remains undiminiſhed. So will I love you as long as I live; ſo I beſeech you to love me. I have a ſecret wiſh at my heart, but it is of ſo delicate a nature that I know not how to expreſs it. I will venture, however, to tell you, that it relates to your marrying; but not ſimply to your marrying—I muſt leave the reſt to Providence who directs all things for the beſt—at leaſt, before I ſay more upon the ſubject, I will reflect more upon it.

"The ſelf-reconciliation I ſpeak of, requires, perhaps, ſome explanation. Do not imagine that time or circumſtances have taught me to think more

more lightly of my tranſgreſſion; or, that I have eaſily abſolved it: No, I ſhudder with abhorrence at the recollection; and I never ſhall pardon it; but I have been taught by a friend—Oh, ſuch a friend!—to know myſelf, to know the real nature of my offence, and to apply the only remedy that could cure the diſtraction of my ſoul. It will, I know, be a ſatisfaction to you to learn what happened to me after I left Ex-Mount, and the progreſs of the recovery of my health, as well as of the tranquillity of my mind; I ſhall hold myſelf bound to give you the account: meanwhile, I intreat you to confirm my eſteem, by adopting the virtuous reſolution of ſubduing, in your attachment to me,

all

all paſſion, all degree of that kind of love, which it is not, which it never will be in my power to return. Do not ſeek me out: hereafter I will ſeek you. The time will come when I ſhall be able to meet you with propriety. You may even haſten it by your conduct, in reſpecting the reſolution I have taken, and in preparing your mind for the enjoyment of a friendſhip, pure and exalted above the reach of paſſion. When I am convinced that you are the maſter, not the ſlave, of yours, I ſhall be anxious to preſs you to my heart as a brother, and to introduce you to the friend, to whom I have alluded in this letter. In whatever part of England I may reſide, you will be welcome to our abode, and

your correſpondence will form one of the greateſt enjoyments of my exiſtence. This, I am confident, cannot be effected immediately, therefore I will candidly inform you, that peculiar circumſtances have brought me into Devonſhire, at preſent, but that it is not probable we ſhould meet, and certainly not with my conſent, for ſome time to come. That you ſhould again meet Mary is more probable; you cannot, however, except by making her unfaithful, obtain through her the knowledge of my preſent place of reſidence, which I am very deſirous ſhould remain concealed. I am perſuaded that this is ſufficient to prevent your aſking her any queſtion about it, ſhould you ſee her again; and I will

will now conclude with aſſuring you of my unabated eſteem, and ſincere affection. I pray God to bleſs you, and all the dear inhabitants of Affington-Houſe; and I remain

"Your ever attached friend,

"SOPHIA."

This letter was left at Affington-Houſe, on the evening previous to the day I met Jones; and had produced on his mind a very different effect to that intended by the writer of it. Sophia's reſolution not to marry, her urging him to exalt his love into pure friendſhip, her injunction to him not to ſeek her, were abſorbed in the vivid lights thrown by his imagination, on thoſe

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paſſages of her letter, which, contrary to her deſign, acted as new incentives to his paſſion. Her beautiful perſon reſtored to blooming health; her noble mind, conſcious of virtue, recovering a dignified tranquillity, in defiance of calumny; her being near; and, above all, the infatuating reflection produced by her praiſe, and avowal of the attachment ſhe would have gloried in, had he declared himſelf before ſhe was perſuaded that he was devoted to another, took ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of his mind, that the arguments and perſuaſions in her letter, appeared to him but ſlight barriers oppoſed to the completion of his happineſs. It was not till he had conſulted his pillow,

pillow, and passed a sleepless night, that his reason, duty, and filial love, presented to him more formidable difficulties, and renewed in his breast the war of emotions. He had risen early after making himself miserable by meditating on the decided opinions expressed by his father: in the alcove he had again read Sophia's letter, and had there begun to be more forcibly struck with the parts adverse to his wishes. He found his father's prejudices supported by them, and he dreaded, more than at first, the *religious celibacy* which the combination of her resolution and sentiment manifested to be her intention. No reflection, however, could chase her from his heart, no heroic design of preferring

the gratification of others to his own could relieve the oppreſſion of his ſoul, and he declared that he was ready to ſink into diſcontent and deſpondency.

It was impoſſible to peruſe Miſs Nevill's letter without eſtimating the great prize of which he had been robbed, nor was I inclined to think it altogether paſt recovery. Delighted with Jones, I gave way freely to my ſentiments, which were congenial with his. Far from condemning Miſs Nevill's calamity as a crime, I paid a juſt tribute to her virtue, while I lamented the error into which ſhe had been driven by the influence of fear, and the pardonable anxiety to ſave her family from

diſ-

difgrace and wretchednefs: but I thought it neceffary, at the fame time to endeavour to fix him in the refolution of obtaining a noble triumph over his paffion, if the object of it proved ultimately unattainable but by facrificing the happinefs of others. Jones's temperament was ardent: he liftened to me with an acquiefcence mixed with impatient ejaculations; it was the fubmiffion to an agonizing operation by a patient whofe reafon had before fuggefted it, but whom nature doomed to fuffer extreme anguifh. Poor fellow! as I ftated principles long his own, he reclined his head upon his hand, his heart beat violently, and every line of his face marked the agitation of his foul. When I had fpoken what

 I thought

I thought friendſhip demanded: "I knew," ſaid he, "that your ſentiments muſt be what you have expreſſed, and your candid expreſſion of them is a proof of the incorruptible ſincerity of your mind."—"Without truth," replied I, "there can be no friendſhip; but it is the part of a friend to ſoften painful truths, and while to deſerve your eſteem I am compelled to incite you to the exerciſe of virtues which ſeem to oppoſe your happineſs, I ſhould be deficient in the moſt pleaſing taſk of friendſhip if I did not endeavour to reconcile them." "Is it poſſible?" cried Jones, eagerly; "how? how? tell me how, Morland." "It appears to me," ſaid I, "that Miſs Nevill has herſelf afforded you

you the means by that letter, ſo ſuited to convince the underſtanding and to move the heart. I would have you, on your father's return, candidly avow to him the ſtruggle you have been maintaining with your paſſion, and promiſe to continue it if you ſhould fail to engage him as an ally on the ſide of your feelings. Then relate the circumſtances of the accidental meetings with Miſs Nevill's maid, and ſhow him the letter. To a mind like Mr. Jones's it cannot but preſent the ſtrongeſt evidence of the ſuperior virtue of this noble young lady, and to ſuch a heart the ſentiments and reſolutions it contains muſt ſpeak with irreſiſtible force. I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if, inſtead of oppoſing your wiſhes, he ſhould himſelf become a

warm ſuitor in your favour. It is evident that Miſs Nevill's reſolutions have not been lightly taken. She hints a wiſh that you ſhould marry, which ſhe would not do were there the ſlighteſt reſerve in her own determinations. I think your greateſt difficulty will lie with her, and that if it is ever conquered it will be through your father."

Jones's countenance brightened as I ſpoke, and, his imagination magnifying the hope I had raiſed, he ſprang forward and embraced me with an ardour only inferior to what he would have beſtowed on his miſtreſs. He thanked me again and again, and bleſſed God that he had at length found a friend. I participated the delight

I had given, and ſaid nothing to check it: it began but too ſoon of itſelf to ſubſide. Ardent hope ſeldom exiſts long unaccompanied by fear. When his mind had dwelled ſome time on the grounds that ſupported the former; when he had expatiated on his father's good ſenſe, benignity, and paternal fondneſs; on the magnanimity, unmerited fate, and charms of Sophia; and when he had taken a view of the long ſettled friendſhip between her family and his, and painted the delightful proſpect of the renovation of their mutual happineſs by the return of a daughter ſo beloved and ſo deſerving of love, he relapſed into the dread of thoſe ſettled prejudices by which the world was guided, and which had already acted

ſo ſtrongly on his father's mind. I took upon me to keep the preponderance on the ſide of hope, and with management I contrived to render him cheerful in ſpite of his ſuſpenſe.

It is now time to return to what immediately relates to myſelf; but I wiſh it to be underſtood, that when I undertook to write theſe memoirs it was at the requeſt of Jones, who, in the events of my life, not only ſaw much that was intereſting, but a fund of moral example in the contraſted characters I had met with. In complying with his deſire it was impoſſible for me not to dwell circumſtantially and warmly on the parts which concern him: they in fact form the moſt pleaſing recollections of my ex-

iſtence, and to have omitted or deſcribed them curſorily would have been to rob my ſtory of its higheſt intereſt. I conſider the day on which I called at Affington-Houſe and converted the kind opinion which Jones had conceived of me into friendſhip, as the moſt propitious of my life. The morning was far advanced before he concluded his narrative, and the hour of dinner overtook us talking of Sophia and raiſing the flattering viſions of hope. He found no difficulty in prevailing on me to dine with him: the cordial of his friendſhip had raiſed my pride to its natural pitch; arrogance was foreign to my heart, but I had not loſt the feelings of a gentleman, which were peculiarly excited by the occurrence of the morning, and I ſat

RAJA SERFOGI'S S

down to table with Jones on the footing of a friend.

In our way to the dining-room we paſſed in the hall a young man of a ſquare athletic make, who ſmiling made an obſequious bow to Jones, which the latter returned with a degree of formality. This he afterwards told me was Mr. Hewſon, the perſon who filled the place of which I had been diſappointed by the vicar of Holcomb's unſeaſonable wrath. "The man," ſaid Jones, "is not without his qualities, but he has a contracted mind; it does not poſſeſs a ſpark of liberality. My father finds no fault with him, but neither does he beſtow any praiſe upon him: I believe he does his duty."

When

When the cloth was removed Jones introduced the ſubject of Broke-Hall. "I am ſure, Morland," ſaid he, "that ſomething will be done to obviate the neceſſity of your ſeeking ſuch an aſylum; in the mean time let me intreat you to ſuſpend your intention. I know from your account this morning that you are not at a loſs for money; but if that were the caſe I have plenty to ſpare. You may judge of Lady Broke's character by her conduct to Sophia. Although my father has thought proper to keep up viſits with the family, I heartily deſpiſe them all, nor does he reſpect them." This ſpeech brought me a little to myſelf. While my thoughts were intent on Jones's

ſtory,

ſtory, and on the means of effecting his happineſs, I felt myſelf his friend, and my mind expanded with the feeling; but when they turned upon my own ſituation, I became more embarraſſed than I was previous to our meeting in the morning. I ſaid I ſhould be happy to owe to his father's influence any proviſion or employment that would enable me to eſcape a mortifying dependence, and perhaps he would return to Affington before it was neceſſary for me to go to Broke-Hall: but that ſome juſt mode of ſupport muſt be adopted, and that it had been the ſole alternative pointed out to me; that Mr. Whitaker's commendation and Lady Broke's fancy had combined.

bined to ſoften my fate; that if I went to Broke-Hall it would not be as a menial, and that the vicar had even raiſed a hope that I might yet complete my education for the church, and find a proviſion in its ſervice. "It is a hope," replied he, "that the Brokes will never realize; but the idea charms me, becauſe I think it can be realized without them. The completion of your ſtudies at Oxford cannot be very expenſive: my father has ſome influence with the biſhop of the dioceſe — your ſtory alone — I ſee through it—yes, my dear Morland, I ſee through it—it ſhall, it ſhall be ſo." Oh! how ſweet to an unfortunate man is the enthuſiaſm of a generous mind

mind resolved on serving him! The service itself, when effected, is not so sweet. Jones completely charmed me; I resigned myself to the delightful visions of his friendship, and I passed the remainder of the day with him, conversing on topics too interesting to be exhausted.

Nor did I forget my musician. I told Jones how I became acquainted with Murphy, mentioned his talents, and described the deplorable state to which he was reduced. Jones knew him by my description, having seen him more than once at Affington parsonage, and attending parade with the band. Being acquainted with the lieutenant-colonel of the regiment,

ment, he readily undertook, at my requeſt, to ſolicit his conſent to Murphy's purchaſing his diſcharge.

On my return, in the evening, to my cottage, my heart, elated with its unexpected happineſs, poured itſelf out in gratitude to Providence for having beſtowed upon me the greateſt bleſſing in life: I was no longer alone on the earth. The great Being to whoſe imperſonal preſence I had fondly reſorted with the utmoſt ſtretch of my faculties, had vouchſafed to grant me the ſociety of a mind like my own. Loſt at Bath in ſwarms of my fellow creatures and in the midſt of ſuperb edifices, I was led to a ſmall tranquil village and an humble cottage to be pre-

prefented by his hand to a friend. Yes, by his hand, which, in fpite of the obfcurity that envelopes it, I have too often traced in the courfe of my life, to miftake.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Difficulty of Condeſcenſion.—The Influence of Friendſhip even in Trifles.—The Hut.—Morland builds again with a Finiſh of Corinthian Columns.—Murphy grateful.—A Chat with Mr. Rundle.—The moſt powerful Allies of Beauty.—Murphy advances.—The Extreme of Happineſs the Brink of Miſery.

I ROSE early the following morning, and was finiſhing my baſon of new milk and houſehold bread, when Jones entered the cottage. He ſaid he had not breakfaſted, and Bridget, delighted with the unexpected viſit, ſupplied him with a bowl ſimilar to mine, which he eat with great reliſh.

No-

Nothing characterizes a noble mind more than a certain unconſtrained, benignant behaviour to a man's inferiors and dependents; and it ſhould ſeem, too, according to my obſervation of life, that nothing is more difficult to attain. Every word, every look of a proud man is calculated to encreaſe the diſtance which Fortune has placed between the rich and the poor; to annihilate ſpirit or excite rebellion. If there be any thing noble in this, it muſt be of a ſpurious nature, derived ſolely from external advantages. On the other hand, condeſcenſion oſtentatiouſly diſplayed, or clumſily attempted by fits and ſtarts, marks weakneſs, and begets contempt. Theſe qualities form common characters: but dignity and humility ſo

blended

blended into habit, as to flatter unaffectedly the feelings of nature without deserting the distinctions of society, excite love and attract the respect they never appear to demand. This mark of a noble and generous spirit is seen only in those who possess the real advantages of good sense and good nature, as well as the distinctions of Fortune. From my earliest acquaintance with the Joneses I saw it in all of them in an eminent degree. There was nothing studied in their manners, no consciousintention of acting according to an adopted rule; their benignity was as free and as natural as the use of their senses. Ben and Bridget felt in the presence of Jones deference mingled with pleasure, but no awe, and the old man without

cere-

SEREOGI'S SAB...

ceremony entertained him with an account of his jeſt upon me the firſt day I ſaw him take his phyſic.

After our breakfaſt I took my friend up to my little room, and ſhowed him the beauties of it through the window. I introduced to him my few companions, Mr. Locke, Dr. Watts, Mr. Guthrie, Seneca, and Horace, whom he immediately recogniſed as old acquaintance. I diſplayed my muſic and amuſed him a few minutes with my lute. He was no practical muſician, having never felt an ambition to excel in the art beyond the ſkill of accompanying his ſiſter in ſimple ſongs on the flute; but I found he had a juſt ear which led him to delight in the harmony of

of ſounds, and he warmly praiſed Miſs Jones's execution and voice, concluding his eulogium with aſſuring me that Sophia was ſuperior to her in both. From the cottage we ſallied to take a ramble round the country. In going through the churchyard, I carried Jones to the grave of William, whoſe ſtory I had told him the preceding day, when I was giving him an account of myſelf in the alcove, on the bank of the Ex. We joined in wiſhing that Amy would make her appearance, and in admiring the beautiful linden. I had formed the ſame wiſh, and beſtowed the ſame admiration before, when I was a ſolitary being, like the linden: my ſentiment and ſenſation were now heightened by the participation of

of a kindred ſpirit. I felt even in this ſlight enjoyment the influence of friendſhip, and anticipating the charm of it in the future events of my life, I became intent on confirming the bleſſing by convincing Jones that I was worthy of his attachment. I converſed with him on ſubjects of ſcience and literature, and I freely poured out the warm ſentiments of my ſoul on religion and virtue. He ſeemed no leſs anxious for my eſteem. We continued the greater part of the day communicating to each other our obſervations on life and on books, and had it not been for the unfortunate poſition in which he ſtood with reſpect to Miſs Nevill, we ſhould have been truly happy.

In

In the courfe of our walk we approached the acclivity on which ftood the concealed Hut of the beautiful cottager of whom I had accidentally caught a tranfient glimpfe on a former ramble. The circumftance recurred to my mind, and I mentioned it to Jones. He knew nothing of the name of Alton, but the place he was well acquainted with. It belonged the year before to a fhopkeeper of Exeter, and he was not aware that he had difpofed of it. We walked round the paling till we came to a gate, from which the road widened a little as it proceeded on the fide of the hill, but fcarcely enough to permit two carriages to pafs in fome places without encroaching on the brufh-wood on

either ſide. The gate ſtanding a-jar, Jones, without ſcruple, puſhed it wide open, ſaying it was a pretty ſpot. The opening of the gate, however, gave us only a view of the back of the cottage, before which was a large court yard, containing the offices belonging to it. The houſe was formed in a right angle towards the river, one ſide being two ſtories high, and the other only one, for the conveniency of a lofty room; but the external height of both ſides was the ſame. An old man was training the ſhoots of a cherry-tree that grew againſt the wall of one of the offices. Jones called to him, and aſked if Mr. Roberts did not live there ſtill. The man ſaid no; that Mrs. Alton lived there, but that there was no-

body

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body at home. On hearing which, as Jones had praiſed the ſpot, I aſked if we might look at the garden. The man ſaid, "he did not know whether he ſhould be doing right, as the ladies were ſo very particular; yet he could not ſee that there would be any harm in our going round; it was but a mite of a place, though zure it was pratty enow."

It was indeed a pleaſant ſpot. From the end of the ſide which fronted the river, down to the water, ran a broad bed of ſhrubs. We entered on the lawn through a ſmall green gate that opened with a latch. The turf, cloſely mown, bordered the bed, the front of which was planted

with dwarf roſe-trees. At the gate ſtood a ſweet-briar uniting with a honey-ſuckle, near the middle was a very fine arbor vitæ, and on the bank of the Ex a picturesque willow drooped its branches over the ſtream: the reſt of the ſhrubbery was admirably diſpoſed with flowering ſhrubs and trees, whoſe differing heights afforded a combined diſplay of their foliage, and whoſe ſucceſſive bloſſoms ſupplied brilliant colours and varied odours, from the opening of the ſpring to the ſhutting in of the winter. The whole extent of the ground before the houſe to the river was lawn, on which grew lilacs near the houſe: a narrow gravel walk ſkirted the bottom of the walls on both lines of the angle, terminating in

in a broad one at the back of the wing oppoſite to that where we entered. This broad walk, edged on either ſide with flower-beds, led us by the ſide of the cottage, covered with vines, to a fine wall, on which were regularly trained ſeveral apricot, peach, greengage, and nectarine trees. The walk turning, continued along this wall, at the end of which was a clump of ever-greens on both ſides. Here it narrowed into an alley, ſhaded by filbert-trees, which ſerpentined the extent of the ground till it came near the river, when the track continued open along a lilac hedge, and joined the broad gravel walk; which again proceeded in a ſtraight line to the wall. The middle ſpace was appropriated to the kitchen-

 garden

garden and fruit trees. The beds of vegetables were interſected by narrow walks, lined with eſpaliers, or by gooſeberry and currant-trees; and ſtandards of various apples, pears, plums, and cherries, grew here and there irregularly. The view of the oppoſite bank of the Ex, and of the country riſing beyond it, was both ſublime and beautiful. We admired every thing but the angular form of the houſe, and that we pardoned from obſerving that the cottage had originally conſiſted only of one ſide, and that the other had been added to it in the beſt manner the ground would allow.

As the gardener was unwilling to admit us into the houſe we did not preſs

preſs it; but ſitting on the bench under the willow, we did not fail to make particular inquiries concerning the inhabitants, who, he ſaid, were a Mrs. Alton and her daughter, ſtrangers in that part of the country. They had only come the laſt Lady-day to the Hut, but from whom they had taken it, or for how long, he did not know. They employed him to take care of the garden, and do out-of-door work, and kept a maid to cook and attend to the houſe, and another to wait on the ladies. They were the beſt ladies in the world, ſo kind-hearted, ſo good, and ſo pious. They ſaw very little company, and ſeldom ſtirred abroad, except it was to do ſome good. When there was hard work to do, ſuch as digging and the like, his miſtreſs always allowed

him to employ a ſtout labouring man, for he himſelf was not able to go through with ſo much as he had been a-uſed to. Bleſs their hearts! they conſider every thing in the right way, ſaid the old man, as he conclud-ed his account of the Altons. "Then may their hearts be bleſſed!" cried Jones: "and bleſſed be their hearts!" added I. "So when they return," ſaid Jones, "tell them that two young men, ſtrolling by their cottage, ſtopped to look at their garden, and bleſſed their hearts." — "Mayhap they may know you," ſaid the gar-dener, "if ſo be you think proper to leave your name." This Jones made no ſcruple to do. "Laud, Sir!" exclaimed the old man, look-ing ſtedfaſtly at Jones, "be you the ſon of Squire Jones of Affington?

It

It be a long while ſin I ſee you, but I ſhould know that face from its likeneſs to the ſquire's. I hope he be well, ſir, and Madam and Miſs." This led to a little converſation, by which Jones found that the old man had formely received ſome ſervices from his father, but had been ſince out of the country for many years, till about three years before, when having loſt all his family, he threw himſelf upon Mr. Roberts, the late proprietor of the Hut, who from loſing, firſt his ſon, and then his wife, in this retreat, had forſaken it about a twelvemonth. That he had, nevertheleſs, continued to take care of the garden, and had been hired by Mrs. Alton, when ſhe agreed with the gentleman who he heard had bought it from Mr. Roberts. He

could not tell the name of the purchaſer. He had paſſed but twice through Affington ſince his return, as he always went to Exeter, when ſent on buſineſs, in ſome market-boat. Jones gave him a crown, and deſired him, whenever he went through Affington, to call and ſee his father.

We now purſued our walk, and though more than five miles from home, took intricate paths, to explore picturesque ſcenes, and get a view of a fine cataract on the other ſide of the Ex. My friend was more proficient in drawing than in muſic. He had taken this view, and from the object he carried me directly to its picture, with the exactneſs and execution of which I

was much delighted. At Affington-Houſe Jones found a letter from his mother, requeſting him to come to Chudleigh the next day, to accompany her home on the following one. I again dined with him, and ſpent the afternoon in delightful converſation, and in examining the books in Mr. Jones's library. When I took leave of him in the evening he warmly preſſed my hand, and thanked me for the comfort he had enjoyed for two days. "I feel," ſaid he, "that I now poſſeſs the friend I have long been wiſhing for: to-morrow I ſhall ſpeak of you to my mother and my ſiſter; they know, they participate my ſentiments on the ſubject of friendſhip, I ſhall make them happy. My father, too, when he returns,

will be delighted with my acquisition: he will use his interest to establish you in the Church, and at the same time to keep you near us. I will, according to your advice, lay open my heart to him: he will now see Sophia's character in a nobler point of view than ever, and will himself become a suitor for me."

The feelings with which I returned to my cottage were similar to those of the evening before, but more confirmed by another day's experience of the genuine magnanimity of my friend. The unaffected manner in which his whole conversation convinced me that truth and rectitude were the pre-eminent objects of his mind, was an earnest to

me,

me, not only of the ſincerity of its attachment at the moment of youthful fervour, but of its conſtancy while I was worthy of it. It was not formed on the baſis of fortune or corrupt manners, but the reverſe, on that of misfortune, and an unſtudied effuſion of nature. The pleaſure that reigned in my heart ſent its ſpirits to my brain: a degree of refined inebriation took place, and before I fell aſleep, I recollected the aërial caſtle I had formerly built, and upon a better foundation erected another which did not vaniſh quite ſo ſoon: but inſtead of a parſonage, a garden, and the love of my pariſhioners, the pleaſing illuſion preſented to my view a ſtall, and a poliſhed congregation. This flaſh of ſecret ambition

tion paſſed my mind undetected at the time, but I have ſince endeavoured to trace the origin of it. I could not aſcribe it to pride, which my education had weeded from my heart, if ever it was there; I therefore attributed it entirely to the ideas that ſprang from my converſation with Jones: with his father's influence with the biſhop, the idea of a ſtall readily aſſociated, and was naturally followed by that of the ſociety with which he mixed. Be this as it may, the next morning, my thoughts turning on Broke-Hall, I reflected on the conduct I was to purſue. It was a damping conſideration, and my ſpirits fell proportionally. If I reſolved, on finding myſelf the friend of Jones, to relinquiſh

quiſh the engagement I had made, as degrading, it was incumbent on me to give Lady Broke immediate information of my intention. To relinquiſh it, however, without conſulting the vicar of Holcomb would ſeem ungrateful, and it would be imprudent, before I had ſeen Mr. Jones to throw up the proſpects the vicar had perceived through her ladyſhip's fancies. I heſitated till Jones returned with his mother and ſiſter, and then I was too much and too agreeably employed to beſtow a thought on Broke-Hall.

In the interval I had ſeen Murphy, to whom I communicated my hopes for him, and he appeared as grateful as if I had actually ſaved his life.

He

He ſaid he had four or five pounds due to him for teaching, and I promiſed to find the remainder neceſſary to make up the twelve guineas required. The joy teſtified by this young man was a full reward for being the means of it, and it increaſed the intereſt I felt for him. I deſired him to ſtate his ſituation to his employers, and to collect what was due to him as ſoon as poſſible: nor did I doubt that it would be in my power to eſtabliſh him in good buſineſs at Exeter.

The day on which Jones left Affington, my imagination, among other ſubjects, dwelled on the ſcenes that had paſſed at Ex-Mount, and in the afternoon I walked to the ſpot to look

look at it. I had often ſeen it before as I went by, but I now viewed it with reflections that beſtowed an intereſt it would never have excited without them. I was proceeding towards Exeter, when Mr. Rundle coming out at the gate, recognized and joined me. I had not met him ſince I was under his care, though I had frequently thought of him, and more than once reſolved to call upon him, from which I had been deterred by the conſciouſneſs of my ſituation. But though I could not force myſelf upon any man, the ſenſe of inferiority did not embarraſs me in company with thoſe who entered freely and on equal terms into converſation with me. I had indeed felt the lecture of my patron of Holcomb,

comb, and had been abaſhed by the pride of the Joneses of Pinhoe: but Rundle's countenance and manners inſpired eaſe, and the pride of *my* Joneses conſiſted in being ſuperior to haughtineſs.

Rundle accoſted me with his natural cheerfulneſs: "after all, ſir," ſaid he, "our legs are our beſt horſes; if they don't carry us ſo ſwiftly, they carry us more ſafely; and if they don't go ſo far an end upon a duſty road, they allow us a greater degree of independence. If you are going to Exeter, for example, we may walk through beautiful fields and ſhorten the way." Anxious to hear ſomething of the Nevill family, I was happy to accept his invi-

invitation. "Though I ſpeak in favour of walking," ſaid he, "I do not forget the fever your legs threw you into; but as a feeling man ſpares his beaſt, ſo a rational man will not let his legs run away with him, and endanger his life. I am glad to ſee by your looks that you keep within bounds." I thanked him, but at the ſame time confeſſed that I ſtill made abundant uſe of my legs: and mentioning my ramble with Jones the preceding day, I told him we had made a round of an extent that took in a pretty ſpot called the Hut, where we ſtopped."—"Stopped!" ſaid he, rather abruptly, "what, at Mrs. Altons?" I replied in the affirmative. "Do you know Mrs. Alton?" cried

he,

he, before I could explain; which I now did, telling him how much I had been ſtruck with Miſs Alton, and inquiring who they were: "Mrs. Alton is an amiable woman," ſaid he, "I knew her before her marriage, nearly twenty years ago, when ſhe went to reſide in Hampſhire: ſhe has been long a widow, and having, beſides the loſs of her huſband, met with other afflicting circumſtances, has become a recluſe. On this principle it is, ſeconded by motives of economy, that ſhe has taken the Hut, whither ſhe has retired with her only daughter, with a determination to ſee no company whatever, at leaſt for the preſent, and I imagine that ſhe will be very angry with the gardener for having admitted you."

"For

"For this I ſhould be ſorry," replied I, "as I am to think that ſo beautiful a young woman as Miſs Alton ſhould be ſhut up from ſociety."—"Seclusion," ſaid he, "is as much her taſte as that of her mother, of whom ſhe is dotingly fond. I give you this hint, leſt in any future ramble, as you do ramble ſo far, you or your friend Jones ſhould think it neceſſary to call. I know it would diſtreſs them."—"I will make it a point to put him on his guard," replied I. "Do," ſaid he, "and ſo will I, for I am intimate with him." "I know you are, ſir," cried I, "as I have heard him ſpeak of your friendſhip, and when I ſaw you come out of Mr. Nevill's gate, it brought to my recollection a ſad event in which you

you took ſo generous a part. May I take the liberty of aſking how Mr. Nevill does, and whether your viſit to Ex-Mount was profeſſional or not."—"I am ſorry," replied he, "to ſay, it was profeſſional: Mr. Nevill has never recovered the blow you allude to, and I doubt whether he ever will, though upon the whole, I think the chances are now in his favour."—"I underſtand," ſaid I, "that ſhe was a lovely young woman." My remark, though defective in point of grammatical preciſion, was perfectly intelligible to Mr. Rundle. "Yes," cried he, "and I can ſee that you are no ſtranger to the effect of her lovelineſs on Jack Jones: but, for his father's ſake, I truſt he has now completely over-

come

come the paſſion ſhe inſpired. This is not, I think, the firſt time we have talked on the ſubject of love: the longer you live, the more will you ſee of the havoc it makes in the world. I know not which is the more to be pitied, the man whom it robs of his life, or the woman whom it robs of her innocence:

Ut flos in ſeptis ſecretus naſcitur hortis,
Quem mulcent auræ, firmat ſol, educat imber,
Multi illum pueri, multæ optavere puellæ:
Idem quum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavere puellæ—

Theſe lines of Catullus are not more beautiful than true: will you have them in Engliſh?

As a ſweet bud juſt opening to the eye,
Screen'd by ſome garden ſhrub that riſes nigh,
By

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA...

By zephyrs fann'd, and rear'd by ſun and
ſhow'r;
Each youth, each maid admires the lovely
flow'r:
Preſs'd by unhallow'd hands it droops its
head,
And falls diſhonour'd on its earthy bed:
No longer to delight retains the pow'r;
No youth no maid admires the fallen flower.

Mr. Rundle having alluded to the poor fellow who died at the inn, I told him that I had viſited the grave of William, and I aſked if he had ever ſeen or heard of Amy. "I have thought of her more than once," ſaid he, "but ſhe has never yet made her appearance, and from the length of time I do not ſuppoſe ſhe ever will now." We both regretted that Wil-

William's ſtory could be traced no farther, and I walked on chatting with this agreeable man till we arrived at the ſuburbs of Exeter, where I took my leave of him, and returned to my cottage, my imagination fully occupied with the late pleaſing occurrences of my life.

Jones returned on the day he had mentioned, with his mother and ſiſter, and as ſoon as he arrived, came over to my cottage, to carry me to Affington-Houſe, aſſuring me that it was not only his wiſh, but his mother's invitation. I yielded to the tide of happineſs, and conſidered it as the interference of Providence. I found Mrs. and Miſs Jones greatly prepoſſeſſed in my favour, and their

ſentiments and manners highly congenial with Jones's. Mrs. Jones ſpoke to me without reſerve, nay as if I had been her ſon, and the ſweetneſs of her countenance won my affection. I have already ſaid that Miſs Jones was handſome, but I then ſpoke of her as having had a tranſient view of her features. Oh! how heightened were their beauty by the charm of affability, good ſenſe, and benevolent ſentiment! The attention with which ſhe liſtened, the deference with which ſhe gave her own opinion, her eagerneſs to be informed of things worthy of her knowledge, and her readineſs to devote her own attainments to the uſe or pleaſure of others, gifted her perſon with a power of attraction which the mere per-

perfection of form and all the vaunted accomplishments of female education can never bestow. I felt in her company a delight I had never experienced before: it was of a different nature from that which I felt in the friendship of her brother. I did not at first readily account for it. The passion of love I was sure it could not be, for two reasons; the one was, that I never thought of her as a mistress; and the other, that I reflected without pain on her being destined to bless some happier man. Perhaps I was a novice, but after deciding that it could not be love, I ascribed it to the general fascination of condescension and affability, combining with female beauty; which I had learned in theory, but which it had

not been my lot to meet with before. However this was, the week that ſucceeded her return from Chudleigh was to me one of inexpreſſible happineſs. The impreſſion I had had the good fortune to make on her father ſhe repeated to me in ſo bewitching a manner, and both ſhe and her mother expreſſed their participation of his ſentiments with ſuch benignity that my heart was completely enraptured. Affection and gratitude on my part, unmixed with awe, and a dignified familiarity on the part of my friends, ſoon domeſticated me at Affington-Houſe. My lute was introduced, and I was not a little proud to diſplay my ſkill in muſic, and to exert my voice. Jones, to pleaſe me, ſent for Murphy, and engaging him

to attend his fifter for the purpofe of accompanying her on the violin, we had feveral little concerts. In the courfe of the week I had likewife the pleafure of procuring my mufician's difcharge: he had collected four guineas, Jones paid him three in advance, and I fupplied the other five. I can truly fay I felt the moft difinterefted pleafure in this action, and that I confidered it at the time as one approved by the Almighty. As the few fcholars, however, whom he taught could not fupply him even with a fcanty fubfiftence, I engaged the benevolent inhabitants of Affington-Houfe to patronize him, and Murphy had half a dozen new pupils before he had received his difcharge a week.

We were too much engaged at Affington to ramble again ſo far as the Hut, but I did not fail to report Mr. Rundle's caution to Jones, who readily determined not to break in upon the retirement of the Altons.

Of the lively enjoyment of this memorable period of my life there was but one abatement; Jones, in ſpite of his hope in his father, in ſpite of the excellence of his underſtanding, and the rectitude of his mind, convinced me that his cheerfulneſs was entirely the effect of endeavour. At times, though apparently attentive, I found him really abſent; and more than once, when he and I were alone, he abruptly quitted the topic of converſation to

ex-

expreſs a hope, or ejaculate a fear reſpecting Sophia, then as ſuddenly reſumed the thread of his diſcourſe. Theſe proofs of the deep root his paſſion had taken, and the apprehenſion of the obſtacles it would meet in the delicacy of his father's feelings, were ingredients that gave a bitter daſh to my cup of pleaſure. Still I was happy; becauſe apprehenſion was mixed with hope. Oh! too happy! for even happineſs may be exceſſive in the preſent ſtate of nature and the viciſſitudes of life.: it is exceſſive when the loſs of it may ſo ſhake reaſon as to deſtroy all the milder foundations of content.

One morning going over to Affington-Houſe, as uſual, knowing

 that

that I was expected, I was informed by the servant that Jones and his sister had been obliged to go to Ex-Mount on a message they had received from Mrs. Nevill, but that Mrs. Jones was at home in her dressing-room, and wished to see me. I flew up the steps with a light heart, and with all the familiarity of a son expected by his mother, but was stopped at the head of the stairs, by Mrs. Jones's maid, who told me that her mistress begged I would go into her young master's study, where she would come to me in a few minutes. I obeyed, and entering Jones's room, took up a book that lay on his table; but though my eyes followed the lines of the pages, they conveyed not a single idea to my mind; for instead of read-

ing,

ing, I fell into one of my viſions of happineſs, which I now uſually did whenever I was alone. I retraced the commencement of my friendſhip with Jones, and its happy progreſs; I pictured Mrs. Jones's return, her goodneſs to me, Miſs Jones's affability, and charming ſmiles; and from the paſt I winged my flight into futurity, where the brighteſt colours met my imagination, and tranſported me into the regions of romance. I was wound up by fancy to a kind of delirium, and when Mrs Jones came in, I danced up to her with an air that bordered upon levity; ſo completely was I carried away by the boundleſs joy of my heart.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS

"My good, young friend," ſaid Mrs. Jones, "I am ſorry to ſee you in ſuch ſpirits, as I am under the painful neceſſity of checking them. Come, ſit down, and hear what I have to ſay with patience and fortitude." Theſe words, and the gravity of her countenance, though ſtill placid, ſurpriſed and alarmed me. "What can I have done," cried I, turning pale, "that deſerves your diſpleaſure? Has my happineſs made me forget myſelf? Have I encroached on your goodneſs? How eagerly will I rectify any error I have committed!"—"I fully believe you," replied ſhe, "but I know of none, and am extremely perplexed how to act. Truſting, however to the good ſenſe you poſſeſs, I think it my beſt

beſt way to apply to yourſelf for aſ-ſiſtance in the performance of a taſk which I aſſure you will ſcarcely wring your heart more than it does mine." — "Gracious God!" exclaimed I, "what heavy misfortune awaits me! *Your* heart wrung! Heaven forbid! Let mine be tortured, but, oh! may your's never know a pang. Tell me, Madam, tell me what it is." My agitation affected Mrs. Jones, and a tear ſtarted to her eye as ſhe bade me be compoſed; it diſperſed, however, without falling, and ſhe ſaid; "I am going to aſk you a queſtion which I am ſure you will anſwer with ſincerity, whatever be the conſequence."—"I will, indeed," cried I, "ſpeak, my, dear Madam, what is it?" — "Have you

ever," ſaid ſhe, "converſed with my ſon reſpecting Sophia Nevill?" If I had been ſuddenly charged with a murder of which I had been guilty, it could not have had a more powerful effect upon my frame. The blood that had retired to my heart ruſhed into my face, and dyed it deeper than ſcarlet. I ſtood abaſhed and mute. "I ſee," ſaid Mrs. Jones, "that you are incapable of uttering a falſehood. If you know her ſtory, which I have now no doubt of, you cannot be ſurpriſed that Mr Jones ſhould be anxious to divert John's thoughts from her, however amiable ſhe may be. He was flattering himſelf that time, and my ſon's good ſenſe, had been propitious to his wiſhes, when by ſome means he was

informed that you had difcovered Mifs Nevill's retreat, and was the medium of a correfpondence between her and John—" Roufed from my trance by this falfehood, I was going to contradict it; but before I had uttered the exclamation it prompted, Mrs. Jones ftopped me by faying; "I beg you will be patient and hear me. I pity more than blame you, for I fee that there is no deceit in your character, and that you efteem it a virtue not to be unworthy the confidence repofed in you. I allow it to be fo, and however I may lament it in the prefent inftance, it does not alter my regard for you. Mr. Jones, alarmed at the intelligence he has received, has written me a letter in which— but remember that I am ftill your

your friend, and be aſſured, I will take a proper opportunity of doing you juſtice—" Mrs. Jones's feelings made her heſitate, and I ſpared her the pain of pronouncing my ſentence, by telling her that I ſaw I had offended Mr. Jones in preſuming to accept the friendſhip of his ſon, and that though I could not eaſily relinquiſh it, I would do what was in my power, I would withdraw from the enjoyment of his company, and from the too delightful honour that had been beſtowed upon me at Affington-Houſe. "Outcaſt of Nature as I am," cried I, "how could I expect to find a place in ſo delightful a ſociety! Was it for me, unknown, unacknowledged in the world, to mingle with the nobleſt of its inhabitants!

bitants! Believe me, Madam," continued I, burſting into tears, "that my felicity was accidental, and that in the enjoyment of it I have not had room for one preſumptuous or ambitious thought. It is Mr. Jones's pleaſure that I ſhould be diſmiſſed—" "Not *diſmiſſed*," ſaid ſhe, "he uſes no ſuch word—" "He wiſhes, however," continued I, "that I ſhould be ſeparated from his ſon—is it not ſo, my dear Madam?" She was ſilent, and her attention ſeemed divided between my queſtion, and the means of ſoftening her reply. "I underſtand your ſilence," ſaid I, "but before I obey the mandate, before I quit this bleſt abode, and reſign myſelf to my fate, let me aſſure you that I have been miſrepreſented

ſented to Mr. Jones. However happy I have been in his ſon's confidence, I feel that I have made no bad uſe of it; I never ſaw Miſs Nevill in my life, I never was the means of conveying a letter to or from her, nor do I know where ſhe reſides. Adieu! my dear Madam, accept the beſt wiſhes of a heart moſt grateful for your kindneſs." I ſeized her hand, kiſſed it, and would have quitted her, but ſhe held me faſt, and drew me back. "Do not think," ſaid ſhe, "that I can give you up ſo eaſily: Mr. Jones will be convinced. In the mean time, keep up your ſpirits, and aſſiſt me in complying with his deſire. I have a letter in my pocket for my ſon, which calls him to London immediately, and I am to prevent

vent his ſeeing you before his departure. I make it a point always to comply, as well as I can, with whatever Mr. Jones wiſhes: in this inſtance I muſt depend upon you; may I?" Choked by tears and an agony of grief, I could make no reply. "Come, come," continued ſhe, "this is not manly, recover yourſelf, and do not forfeit the eſteem you have gained, by ſhewing me that you are unequal to the trials Providence thinks proper to put you to."—"It is no ſlight trial," ſaid I, recovering myſelf a little, "but I *will* remember that I am in the hand of Providence, and ſubmit." On my ſaying this, ſhe embraced me affectionately, bade me be of good cheer, and ſaid ſhe would let me know when ſhe could

could ſee me again. I then promiſed her to leave Affington till Jones was gone, and, once more kiſſing her hand, bleſſed her, and tore myſelf away, the moſt miſerable of men.

CHAP. XIX.

Morland avoids his Friend.—A Doubt of Providence.—The Doubt dispelled.—Enmity of Man to Man.—Mr. Whitaker's good News. How received by Morland, who removes from Affington to Broke-Hall.

How wonderfully are we made! how myſterious is the connexion between the body and the ſoul! That my feet conveyed me to my chamber is certain, but it is as certain that I was ſitting there ſome time before my ſenſes perceived it. My mind and perſon were as much ſeparated in their reſpective operations, performed

formed at the ſame juncture, as if they had never belonged to each other. When I was brought to myſelf by a freſh ſhower of tears, I had no recollection of the objects I muſt have paſſed, or of the manner in which I had been tranſported from Jones's ſtudy to the chair on which I ſat. I had been hurled from the pinnacle of happineſs, and ſtunned by the fall. I remained a conſiderable while abſorbed in my miſery before I could even make an effort to recover myſelf. At length I was rouſed by recollecting my promiſe to Mrs. Jones, and her reliance on me, and I reſolved to do every thing in my power to juſtify the good opinion entertained of me by that amiable woman. Putting a change of

linen

linen and my Seneca into my pocket, and telling Bridget that particular circumſtances obliged me to go from home for a day or two, I left the cottage, and ſtruck acroſs the country to avoid the poſſibility of meeting Jones returning to Affington-Houſe.

I put up at a ſmall public-houſe on the Chudleigh road, where I ſtaid all night. My endeavours to compoſe my mind were long unſucceſsful. I was not conſcious of having forfeited by miſconduct the happineſs I had loſt; but however this may appear to ſome a ground of conſolation, I felt it no allay to my misfortune; on the contrary I at firſt thought it doubly hard upon me, not reflecting that

that had I deſerved it my conſcience would have juſtified the puniſhment, and that remorſe would have been added to ſorrow. I read Seneca, but he made little impreſſion on me, for my mind wandered elſewhere. I endeavoured to fix it on Providence, as I had been accuſtomed to do in former paroxyſms of wretchedneſs, but for the firſt time in my life it rejected the conſolation: if I did not murmur, I at leaſt gave up the idea of my meeting with Jones being the reſult of his will; I perceived it to be an accident eaſily and ſuddenly defeated, and my ſoul, incapable of comfort, reſorted to objects that increaſed its miſery. Fooliſh, fooliſh fellow that I was!

I paſſed

I paſſed a ſleepleſs night, till the houſe was ſtirring in the morning, when I fell into a doze which laſted about two hours. During this ſlumber I dreamt that I was ſailing rapidly with the tide down the river Ex, till approaching the bank formed by the gardener of the Hut, the breeze ſlackened, and I ſaw the lovely Louiſa Jones ſitting with another lady on the bench under the willow. I ordered the boatman to ſteer for the bank, on perceiving which the lady that was with Miſs Jones made a haſty retreat into the houſe. I nevertheleſs landed, and was received with an enchanting ſmile; but inſtead of the bench under the willow at the Hut, I was ſitting in the ruſtic alcove at Affington with Miſs Jones, holding her

her hand, and occaſionally preſſing it to my lips. After ſome time we were no longer in the alcove, but at the altar of a cathedral where the biſhop was reading the marriage ſervice, and I was placing the wedding ring on her finger, when the viſion vaniſhed. On waking, the dream was very ſtrong in my recollection, and having little excitement to riſe, I continued in bed combining the pictures of memory and imagination. After lying ſome time in this ſtate, I looked back through the four-and-twenty hours that had elapſed ſince I left Affington, and I found that my thoughts had been much leſs frequently turned upon Jones than upon his ſiſter. Combining this obſervation with my dream, I ſud-

ſuddenly detected the paſſion that was ſtealing into my heart, and in ſeeing my danger, I became ſenſible of my ingratitude to that Providence which was reſcuing me from it. Fortunate for me was it that my paſſions were leſs ardent than thoſe of my friend, for, as it was, I experienced no little difficulty in reſtraining my imagination to a moderate contemplation of charms that had ſo imperceptibly captivated me. Another ſuch week paſſed at Affington I muſt either have aſpired to the hand of Louiſa Jones, or ſunk into irretrievable deſpair: but awakened to a ſenſe of my ſituation, I was enabled by a ſeaſonable ſtruggle to give her that place in my eſteem which ſhe deſerved, and to think of her not ſo

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

often as of her brother. However, though I consoled myself in some degree by considering my misfortune in this point of view, it is not to be understood that I felt less anguish at being separated from Jones, but that I learned to bear it better.

One thing that gave me great pain, when I had leisure to think of it, was, that I had unwittingly made an enemy; a secret and ungenerous one, who to injure me scrupled not to employ falsehood; an enemy I endeavoured in vain to trace, for I had injured no one, I had offended no one; nor could I account for the discovery of the part that was true in the intelligence conveyed to Mr. Jones, for the whole subject of his

ſon's confidence had been imparted to me with the utmoſt privacy. Man lives amidſt enemies of his own ſpecies, all other creatures of the ſame nature ſpare one another, even devils are ſaid to agree among themſelves;

> O ſhame to men! devil with devil damn'd
> Firm concord holds—

but man delights in injuring man, in calumny and in blood. Some of the ſentiments of the curate of Reading occurred to my mind, and I began to think leſs favourably of mankind than formerly; but far from adopting the ſaying of one of the Grecian ſages, *the majority is bad*, I advanced no nearer to miſanthropy

than

than to allow that there are bad as well as good: in my experience the latter ſtill preponderated, in ſpite of Pinhoe Jones, the unfeeling landlady, the villain Montague, and my unknown enemy. I once more fervently recommended myſelf to Providence, and reſolving to attend to every thing that depended upon my own conduct, I ſet out to pay my reſpects to the vicar of Holcomb, ſtill keeping Oxford in view.

I fortunately found Mr. Whitaker at home and alone. Having ſent in my name, he deſired his boy to tell me to come in. I found him reading a new magazine. Without taking

taking his eyes off the page, he called me by my name, aſked me how I did, and deſired me to ſit down. I remembered his lecture on eaſe, and continued ſtanding. He went on reading, pronouncing detached ſentences in a kind of loud whiſper, and taking no notice whatever of me. I remained near ten minutes in this aukward and mortifying predicament. He at laſt put the magazine down, and turning from his table towards me caſt one knee over the other, ſitting on the outer edge of his nether thigh, ſo as to expoſe full to my view the part behind tightly compreſſed within its raiment; at the ſame time one arm careleſsly thrown on the back of his chair ſupported his head, while the other

found its contrafted curve a-kimbo on his projected hip. I fhould not do juftice to my patron if I did not add, that the fall of the magazine from his hands, the affumption of the patronal pofture, and a repetition of, "Morland, how do you do?" were fimultaneous. After I had thanked him, and made my enquiry in turn: "Where have you been all this time?" faid he; "I have very pleafant intelligence for you—Come, take a chair, take a chair." I hefitated—"Pfha! man," cried he, "do as I bid you." On this I fat down. "I have not feen you," continued the vicar, "fince you were at Broke-Hall. The very next day I had a vifit from Lady Broke and her daughter; her ladyfhip not being able to poft-

poſtpone thanking me for recommending you to her. You completely faſcinated her with the Ode on the Paſſions. I did not let her cool, my boy; I repeated all I knew of your hiſtory, ventured to hint a belief that you were well deſcended, as I found it not diſagreeable to her pride, and endeavoured to influence all her feelings in your favour. It had its effect: ſhe determined to amend your fate, and ſaid ſhe believed ſhe ſhould principally employ you as her ſecretary. She told me too that if you choſe it you might go to Broke-Hall before the time appointed, and the ſooner the better. I give you joy, Morland: I am highly pleaſed that I have put you in ſo fair a train. As I adviſed

you before, mind your *p's* and *q's*, and you may be appointed to charm her ladyſhip from the pulpit."

I felt my obligation to Mr. Whitaker, and I thanked him ſincerely; but at the ſame time I could not avoid a ſecret reflection on that careleſs diſpoſition by which the very beſt intentions of benevolent characters are liable to be fruſtrated, and I foreſaw a diſappointment at Broke-Hall, if not ſimilar in its nature to that at Affington, ariſing from a ſimilar cauſe. It was full three weeks ſince Lady Broke had intimated her deſire that I ſhould ſhelter myſelf immediately under her roof, and to ſuffer nearly the month ſhe at firſt appointed to elapſe, without even noticing

ticing the favour ſhe conferred in the alteration, might be deemed unpardonable. I had told Mr. Whitaker, as well as Flora, where I lodged, and from the latter's not ſending to me, it was clear that her lady left the information to the former, and would probably impute my neglect of her offer to choice. This, two days ſooner, would have given me no uneaſineſs, but in the turn Mr. Jones's mind had taken it created ſome alarm, and I expreſſed a wiſh that I had known Lady Broke's permiſſion ſooner. "Why, indeed," ſaid the vicar; "it would have been better, and what in the name of wonder have you been about that I never ſaw you?" I ſaid that having informed him where I ſtaid, and alſo given my

direction to her ladyſhip's ſervant, I was unwilling to appear troubleſome. "Nonſenſe!" cried he, "you ought to have come to the vicarage. However, I do not think there's any harm done; you muſt go over to the Hall immediately, and make a handſome excuſe—You may throw all the blame upon me, and I will juſtify you."

This new mark of Mr. Whitaker's benevolence excited ſo lively a gratitude that I loſt ſight of his imperfections, and it was not till I had left him and was meditating on his character in my way to Broke-Hall, that I again lamented that it ſhould be ſo heterogeneous; that goodneſs of heart ſhould be counteracted by thoughtleſſneſs, readineſs to oblige by

by confequential manners, and confcioufnefs of propriety by pride and exceffive irritability. I was by no means fo much hurt with him on this occafion as I had been on the former one, for I reflected that had it been my lot to have been domefticated fo early at Broke-Hall, I fhould probably never have formed a friendfhip with Jones, and fhould certainly have had no intimacy with him at that time. However painfully torn from him, I ftill felt his attachment the greateft bleffing of my life, ftill fondly cherifhed a hope that time and events, under the guidance of providence, would reftore us to each other. His communications, indeed, had opened a fource of mortification, to which it was now ne-

ceſſary I ſhould reconcile myſelf; they had diſguſted me with the perſon by whom my preſent wants were to be ſupplied, and my hopes for the future ſuſtained. The whims of Lady Broke were amiable traits, were abſolute virtues, compared with her conduct towards the Nevills, in which ſhe was preſented to my view as the malignant enjoyer of the misfortune of a charming family, and as the deteſtable ſlanderer of a lovely creature, who deſerved more pity than condemnation. It was not without a wound to my feelings that I determined to yield to neceſſity and become the dependant of a being whom I could neither reſpect nor regard: a determination which I have never reconciled to my mind,

and

and which, while I live, though it has been expiated, I ſhall conſider as a want of virtue. As I walked from Holcomb to Broke-Hall I endeavoured to baniſh from my mind the part of her character that created abhorrence, and to dwell on thoſe that excited ridicule and contempt; on her vanity, and pretenſion to taſte and literature. Even in this point of view, in ſpite of the vicar's leſſon, I felt averſe to the part I was about to play. It was the part of a hypocrite, and its being my intereſt, far from extenuating was an aggravation of the vice. To turn the follies of others to our own advantage in private life, was a maxim againſt which my feelings and my principles revolted. I was more than

than once upon the point of turning my back on Broke-Hall, but felf prevailed, and in the dread of lofing every refource, I fuffered my reafon to be led by the common arguments of the needy, that it was neceffary to find a livelihood, and as choice was rarely to be had, that which offered was not to be rejected; that the dependant was not anfwerable for the conduct of thofe by whom they were fupported; that if the poor refolved to be connected with thofe only who were virtuous, how many wretched beings would ftarve! To this reafoning of poverty my acquaintance with hiftory enabled me to add the examples of wife, learned, and virtuous flaves, who ferved villains and monfters, and I arrived at

the Porter's lodge in ſome degree reconciled to my fate.

At the houſe door I aſked for Flora, who, informed of my being in the hall, did not ſuffer me to kick my heels there ſo long as I had done before. I ſoon heard her light feet patting quickly through the paſſage, and I went forward to meet her. "Oh! you are come at laſt!" ſaid ſhe; "but I can aſſure you my lady is not very well pleaſed at your neglect of the permiſſion ſhe gave you, to come home immediately: here, has ſhe been expecting you theſe three weeks paſt; and not a word from you why or wherefore you did not come. La! after ſeeing us that day, I ſhould have thought my lady's meſſage

meſſage would have ſet all your emotions in a flutter; and, that you would have flown to us the moment you heard it. Here did my lady order a nice room in the caſtle to be got up for you, nay, and ſaw to it herſelf, and made arrangements for your being treated like a misfortunate gentleman. Oh fie! Mr. Edward! who would have expected ſuch a want of emotion from ſuch a genteel exterior? I ſhould as ſoon—" How long Flora would have harangued, I cannot pretend to ſay; but, reſtraining the air in her lungs, beyond an appropriate quantity of words, ſhe was obliged to ſtop in the beginning of a new ſentence, to draw her breath, and I haſtily ſeized the opportunity to ſpeak in my turn.

"Gently,

"Gently, gently, my pretty Flora," ſaid I, "liſten to me a moment, and you'll not find me ſo devoid of feeling as you imagine. I never heard a word of your Lady's goodneſs towards me, till this very morning; nay, I have not ſat down ſince it was communicated to me, but came on directly, to receive her Ladyſhip's commands."—"What nice words you do uſe!" exclaimed Flora; "it is a clear preſumptuous proof, that you are a misfortunate gentleman under a cloud. Well! I am ſo glad! but how came you not to hear it before? My Lady told me ſhe ſent you word you might come when you liked." I explained the vicar's negligence; but, at the ſame time, divided the blame between him and Flora, whoſe emotions

emotions I arraigned in turn, for not making uſe of the knowledge ſhe had of my direction. "Why, indeed," ſaid ſhe, "my Lady took it for granted that Mr. Whitaker would let you know immediately, and ſo ſuppoſing you did know ſhe thinks you very careleſs; but now, I wiſh with all my heart I had wrote to you of my own head. I tell you what," continued ſhe, laying her forefinger gently on my ſhoulder, "I'll go and explain matters to her Ladyſhip before you ſee her, that ſhe may receive you as you deſerve" I told her it was exactly what I was going to propoſe, and Flora, after ſome friendly ſpeeches, left me among the ſatinwood bookcaſes, exotic plants, birds, and fiſhes.

I have

I have little to ſay of this ſecond interview with Lady Broke; I ſaw her but for a few minutes, as ſhe was called away from me to company; her anger was appeaſed, and I engaged to return with my things to Broke-Hall the next day, or at fartheſt the day after. I gave myſelf this latitude that I might be ſure Jones was gone from Affington, before I ventured to go to my cottage; for I was determined, whatever I ſuffered, to deſerve the confidence and eſteem of his mother by a ſtrict obſervance of my promiſe.

At Exeter, I called on Mr. Rundle, from whom I learned, that Jones had loitered ſome hours in the town that very morning; that he had been en-

enquiring for me, and, that he had at laſt, with the greateſt reluctance, ſet off upon his journey. This intelligence gave a ſevere pang to my heart; and in being true to my promiſe I charged myſelf with being untrue to friendſhip. How was this remorſe encreaſed, when at Affington, I found that Jones had been again and again at my cottage, both on the evening before, and on the morning I was at Holcomb and Broke-Hall, and, that he had left two letters for me! In the firſt, ſtill hoping to ſee me, he briefly mentioned, that Mr. Jones had ſent for him immediately to London; preſſing me to come to Affington-Houſe. In the ſecond, he expreſſed ſurpriſe at my abſence, and great uneaſineſs

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left he ſhould be obliged to go off without ſeeing me. He ſaid, that he had written me a letter chiefly reſpecting Miſs Nevill, which he had ſent by Hewſon, who not finding me at the cottage had brought it back, but that he would ſtill ſend it, if he did not ſee me: he wiſhed me to go to London with him, and conjured me to give up the ſcheme of dependence on the Brokes. He concluded with a warm effuſion of friendſhip, entreating me, if I returned in time, to go over to the Hotel in Exeter, where he ſhould remain till the laſt moment in the hope of ſeeing me. On reading this letter I repented the promiſe I had given to Mrs. Jones, and reproached myſelf with refining away the claims of friendſhip in fa-

vour

vour of an imaginary virtue, exerted for the gratification of prejudice. I felt a momentary defire to affert, in defiance of every oppofition, the rights of an attachment founded on the pureft principles; but, when I reflected on the union of the Joneses, I would much rather have died, or lingered out life in forrow, than have been the inftrument of their diffenfion. I again refigned myfelf to Providence, confident that if I acted my part, his difpenfations, however fevere or unaccountable, would prove real bleffings.

Having compofed my mind as well as I could, I prepared for my departure from Ben's cottage. It did not require much time; for I had only

only to put my books and muſic into my trunk, and return the lute to its owner. Ben and Bridget were griev- ed to hear they were to loſe me, and little Nancy had a hearty cry. I aſ- ſured them I would never forget them, and that I would come and ſee them as often as I could. I paid for my lodging and board a month, though I had been with the good people little more than three weeks: this Bridget at firſt oppoſed, but I prevailed upon her to take the two guineas, and I gave Nancy a crown to buy her a new pair of ſhoes. Be- fore I went to bed I took a review of my finances, and found in my purſe, a ſum which with the money depo- ſited for the lute, made twenty-ſeven pounds and a few ſhillings; nine pounds

pounds lefs than it contained when I came to the cottage; but, as five guineas of the reduction were a loan to Murphy, I was very well pleafed with my economy, notwithftanding the little extravagance I had run into in the hire of a lute, which, with fix leffons from Murphy, that I had paid when I left off learning, amounted exactly to a guinea. And here let me obferve how little happinefs and extravagance are connected: except the bitter feparation which terminated my abode at the cottage, I confider the days I fpent under Ben Collins's roof among the happieft of my life. I had no defire for fumptuous fare, my natural wants were fupplied, I enjoyed my liberty, my prefence was a pleafure to the worthy people with

with whom I lived, I indulged my propenſity for muſic, I was of ſervice to an unfortunate being of my own ſpecies, and my mind, elated with the friendſhip I had formed with Jones, ſtood at a degree of felicity not often attained in the boſom of fortune; yet my whole expenditure for the month, and I included my bill at the inn on the Chudleigh road, did not amount to four pounds:

> "Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long."

Leſt, however, theſe Memoirs ſhould get into the hands of ſome penurious being, who might be inclined to turn this obſervation to the ſupport of ſordid parſimony, I muſt ſay, that the happineſs of a man cannot but be

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augmented in proportion as he poſſeſſes the power of communicating it to others; that he who ſhuts up his means, cuts off his own ſource; and that avarice is one of the moſt deteſtable vices of the ſoul.

I ſlept little during my laſt night at the cottage: ſo near to Affington-Houſe, I could not but reflect on the occurrences of the laſt week, and on the viciſſitudes of life; on all that had been propitious to hope, and on the dreadful ſentence that had repreſſed it. I roſe notwithſtanding at my uſual hour, in order to be ready to put my trunk into any cart going to Exeter. This being ſecured, I eat my breakfaſt, chatting with Ben and Bridget as gaily as I could with a heavy

a heavy heart, and ſoon after, taking my lute in my hand, I bade them farewell: the affectionate cottagers bleſſed me again and again, and ſtood at their door as long as their eyes could follow me. Paſſing Ex-Mount I ſtopped to look once more at the houſe, and to heave a ſigh to the Nevills. There, thought I, there was a fall of happineſs, compared to which, mine was but the burſting of a brilliant bubble.

Muſing on the obſcurity in the diſpenſations of Providence, ſome of which appeared totally abandoned to the influence of fortuitous cauſes, while others ſeemed ſelected for his immediate guidance, I proceeded ſlowly to Exeter, where I returned

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

the lute to its owner, and received the money I had depoſited. I then called on Murphy, meaning to admit him, to a certain degree, of my confidence; but he was not in the way, and I left a meſſage informing him that I was removed, but would ſee him ſoon. At a loſs how to forward my luggage from Exeter, I luckily met my little arch friend of Holcomb, the vicar's boy, who undertook to convey my trunk to the vicarage, whence it might be carried on in the afternoon, by means of ſome of the baronet's wains. I thanked the youth, and truſting all my little property to him, ſet out on foot for Broke Hall, where I arrived at an early hour, and was welcomed by my friend Flora, who undertook to be

miſtreſs

miſtreſs of the ceremonies, and uſhering me into a room contiguous to her lady's apartments, introduced me to her companions, Iris and Urania, otherwiſe Miſs Jeney M'Carthy, and Miſs Nanny Anderſon. Iris was dreſſed in an airy garb, of all the colours of the rainbow; and Urania in a ſky blue gown, ſprinkled with ſtars. Iris, as I afterwards learned, had charge of her lady's millinery, and Urania of her wardrobe; Flora, whoſe real name was Sukey Fudge, and who ſeemed to take the lead of the two other damſels, was more immediately the perſonal attendant of Lady Broke. They were all three deeply verſed in taſte and emotion, which they had acquired at the fountain head, their lady being conſider-

ed by them and herſelf, as the ſtandard of elegance and ſenſibility. Whenever they ſpoke, it was with a heaving of the boſom, and a twiſt of the neck; and, in expreſſing the moſt trifling opinion, it ſeemed the conſtant duty of their eyes to give it force. It was no doubt owing to the vulgarity of the ſounds of Jeney, Nanny, and Sukey, that they were diſcarded for the ſofter, claſſical ones of Flora, Iris, and Urania. The two nymphs received me with due elegance and emotion, and I learned that I was to have the honour of being ranked with them, that is to ſay, I was to ſhare their breakfaſt, and form a ſecond table at dinner with them and the butler. I was wiſe enough not to betray any diſreliſh for

this

this aſſociation; and though my heart was extremely heavy, I endeavoured to return their civilities with cheerfulneſs, that they might not think me proud.

My trunk was brought in while I was with Mr. Dalby's graces; for the vicar's boy had overtaken me in his cart, and had, ſoon after I paſſed Holcomb, met with an opportunity of ſending it on. Flora deſired Thomas, the ſervant that brought it in, to carry it to the room allotted for me, which ſhe ſaid ſhe would go and ſhow me at the ſame time. She conducted me by a narrow ſtaircaſe to an apartment ſituated in the caſtle adjoining the new building, where telling me, ſhe hoped I ſhould find

 every

every thing convenient, and that ſhe would let me know when her lady wanted me, ſhe left me to ſettle myſelf in my new chamber The man who brought up my trunk loitered in the room till ſhe was gone, then came up to me, and aſked if he could be of any uſe to me. I thanked him and ſaid, that I was accuſtomed to wait upon myſelf, and would not trouble him. "I ſhould think it no trouble, Sir," ſaid Thomas, "even though I had not heard you was a gentleman; pray let me uncord your box." I was a little ſurpriſed at this attention, and told him he might help me, as he was ſo obliging. "I hope, Sir," ſaid he, as he proceeded in the little ſervice he had offered, "that you will be comfortable in

your

your ſituation with my lady, though your coming is the occaſion of my going." I was conſiderably affected by this intelligence, given in ſuch a manner, and at ſuch a moment. "My good fellow," cried I, "I am truly ſorry that you ſhould loſe your place, becauſe I know from Lady Broke's own mouth, that you have done nothing to deſerve it." "It is not for what I have done," replied Thomas, "but for what I can't do. My lady means to get up a comical kind of an entertainment called a maſk, and ſhe put me to get by heart, and make one of the ſervants' characters; but I could not manage to remember the words one after another as they come, though I could tell the ſignification of every ſentence: and to

to be ſure ſhe has a right to pleaſe her fancies; yet, Mr. Morland, I can't but think it a little hard, that after doing for years the duty for which I was hired, I ſhould be turned away becauſe I am not handy enough to be a ſtage-player."—" I think ſo too," ſaid I, " and if I had any power you ſhould certainly keep your place, even though I gave up the ſituation her ladyſhip has thought proper to provide for me: but my ſtaying or going, I fear, will make no difference as to you."—" Perhaps" anſwered he, " when you come to talk to my lady, you may put her off the mind of parting with me." Having promiſed to do my beſt for him, I entered into ſome talk with him reſpecting the family,

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and I found his attachment was more to the ſubſtantial advantages he enjoyed in eating and drinking, in clothes and good wages, than to the perſons from whom they were derived. He ſaid, however, that it was not for him to judge of his employers; they were to look to themſelves, he had only to do his buſineſs and be ſatisfied. I aſked him how he came to be ſo well acquainted with my name, and what concerned me. "Oh Lord, Sir," ſaid he, "ſuch is the itch of talking, that what is known to one, ſoon flies through the family. All that Mr. Whitaker ſaid of you to my Lady ſhe told Flora, with her intentions reſpecting you; Flora told it to Iris and Urania, they talked of it at dinner before the butler

and the ſervant that waited on them, and it was then carried to the kitchen. Every thing is known to every body, though to be ſure ſome things are only talked of in whiſpers, and by two's at a time, for they are ſecrets; ſuch as my lady's ways, Mr. Broke's goings on, and Miſs Broke's frolics; but as I ſaid before, it is no buſineſs of mine, they have money enough, and may do as they pleaſe." Saying this, he offered to take my clothes and ſhoes to bruſh, to which I now readily conſented, for they wanted it much. When he was gone, I had leiſure to examine my room, which, though antique, was not unpleaſant. It was furniſhed with chairs, tables, and a couple of large looking glaſſes. My bed was a very neat one,

one, and placed in the farther angle of the chamber to increafe the fpace before it. I could have been fatisfied; but, alas! as I fat in a chair to reft, I again felt myfelf alone. Jones was torn from me, perhaps for ever; and could any one at Broke Hall fupply his place?

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Morland's ſecond Reception at Broke Hall.—Preparations for celebrating Miſs Broke's Birth-Day.—The Secrets of a Maſk betrayed.—The Part appointed for Morland.—Lady Broke's Mythology.—The Butler.—A ſecond Table.—An unexpected Meeting.

IN the courſe of an hour I received a ſummons to attend Lady Broke, who honoured me with a gracious reception in conſequence of Flora's report; but neither her ſmiles nor favourable ſentiments could obliterate the impreſſion her conduct had made on my mind, and ſhe appeared hi-

deous in my eyes: nor did this natural diſguſt wear off ſufficiently to leave me unconſtrained, till her converſation, queſtions, and directions, fixed my attention on her character and purſuits. She was in the china-room. After expreſſing her ſatisfaction with me, and her diſſatisfaction with Mr. Whitaker, ſhe deſired me to take the chair that was on the oppoſite ſide of the table at which ſhe was ſitting. Greatly ſurpriſed at her condeſcenſion, I conceived that ſhe had forgotten herſelf; I therefore bowed and continued ſtanding, which ſhe obſerved and ſaid; "I ſee, Mr. Morland, that you don't belie the obſervation of that great genius —a—I forget his name, who ſaid, that modeſty is ever the attendant of merit.

merit. I have had a great deal of converſation with Mr. Whitaker about you, and I was pleaſed to find that I had not been miſtaken in my ideas of you the firſt time I ſaw you, for you muſt know that I have a great deal of diſcernment, and I ſaw, by the firſt glance, that you were any thing but a footman; in ſhort, I ſaw that you were a gentleman in diſguiſe, and I went the very next day to Holcomb to convince the vicar that it was exactly as I thought. At firſt, ſuppoſing it would be adverſe to your intereſt, he attempted to ſuppreſs the fact, but his art was nothing to my diſcernment; and when I aſſured him that my feelings were intereſted about you, for you muſt know I have a great deal

deal of feeling, he out with the truth. Now pray then ſit down, and let me talk to you." I bowed, and, conſidering this as the firſt ſtep of the pulpit, obeyed.

"You muſt know," proceeded her ladyſhip, "that I have long wiſhed for a perſon to keep copies of my letters; and tranſcribe things for me; for though my nymphs are clever girls, they none of them write a good hand. The poſt will exactly ſuit you, and as you read and recite ſo well, you will exactly ſuit me. I will make your ſituation comfortable, and I don't doubt you will return my goodneſs to my ſatisfaction. I have already given orders that you ſhould be uſed with all the delicacy due to

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an unfortunate gentleman, and Flora, whom you know, will take care that you meet with nothing to hurt your feelings. Speak to her freely for whatever you may want. I am only ſorry for one thing, which is, that I cannot offer you a cover at Sir Nicholas's table. Sir Nicholas is a ſingular character, as you will ſee when you have been a little longer in the family. By and by, however, even that may be done, and in the mean time, I think you will find yourſelf tolerably ſituated at the ſecond table where you will ſit down only with my young women and Sir Nicholas's butler, Mr. Radley, a very decent, unaſſuming, honeſt man." I replied that I could not but be ſatisfied with an arrangement

ſo much beyond my expectation, when the ſudden change of my proſpects in life induced the only perſon in the world who manifeſted the ſlighteſt concern for me to propoſe ſervice as the ſole alternative remaining for my ſupport. This excited Lady Broke's curioſity to hear from myſelf the account of my views, and of my diſappointment; and as the vicar's caution againſt liberal pretenſions appeared no longer neceſſary, I ſcrupled not to make the moſt of my hopes while Mrs. Waller was alive. I gave her ladyſhip an account of my education, and I particularly dwelt on that part of it in which I was preparing myſelf for orders. I ſpoke of Oxford, and of the eagerneſs with which I was purſuing my ſtudies when the curate of Reading came to an-

announce my fall. If it was a meanneſs, I own I had in mind the vicar's *p* and *q* counſel, and was willing to improve the intereſt I had gained with Lady Broke. In doing this I ſtudiouſly avoided all mention of the Joneses, and indeed of all the events that had occurred ſince my arrival in Devonſhire.

While I ſpoke, ſhe occaſionally ejaculated an expreſſion of pity, and when I concluded, ſhe ſaid nobody diſtinguiſhed merit ſooner than ſhe did, and that I might perhaps have to congratulate myſelf on her penetration. At preſent, however, her mind, ſhe ſaid, was engaged on preparations for an elegant feſtival in honour of Miſs Broke's birth-day, for which a great number of invita-

tions had been iſſued and accepted. Every perſon of note in the county, and many of diſtinguiſhed rank from diſtant parts of the kingdom had promiſed their company. It was in ſhort, to be a *fête* which was to exceed in magnificence all that had ever been known of the kind before. Her ladyſhip regretted that I had not come ſooner, as my being preſent would have forwarded the preparations; "but," continued ſhe, "I know your talents, and what depends upon you, will not require much time to be perfected." To this compliment I made my bow, and ſaid I ſhould be happy to receive her commands. She then told me that it was her intention to complete the entertainment by an allegorical maſk which

which ſhe had written herſelf, and which had been highly applauded by Mr. Dalby, a friend of her's, of great taſte and judgment. "You are to take a chief part in it," ſaid ſhe, ringing the bell, the pull of which hung at her hand, "and that you may fully enter into the ſpirit of it, I intend to read the whole to you." I aſked if ſhe would permit me to read it. "Oh! no:" replied ſhe, "I like to read, myſelf; for you muſt know I am an excellent reader: I ſuppoſe not one in a thouſand reads like me. Mr. Dalby thinks Flora a good reader, and ſo indeed ſhe is; but I like my own reading ſo much better than any body's I ever heard, that, to tell you the truth, I can't attend to any body elſe."—"No doubt,

doubt, your Ladyſhip," ſaid I, ſtraining to give utterance to a compliment which I ſhould have murdered, and with it, perhaps, my new hopes, had not Flora's entrance fortunately drawn her attention, and cauſed her to interrupt me herſelf by deſiring the nymph to come and take the key of her *ſecretaire* and bring the maſk.

While Flora was gone, "let me ſee," cried ſhe, "ſhall I read the maſk firſt? or ſhall I go with you, and look at the diſpoſition of the temporary theatre erecting for the performance of it? I think I'll take you to look at it firſt, for then, you know, you will have the effect in your head as I read—yes, that ſhall be

be it; things to have their effect ſhould be done in order, nobody has ſuch an idea of order as I have." Flora, who had been no farther than through the aviary to the complicated boudoir, now returned with the maſk, which ſhe gave to her lady. "I am going," continued her ladyſhip, ſpeaking to Flora, "to the ſtage, get your paraſol, and come with me, and bring Iris and Urania." —"Yes, my lady;" ſaid the nymph with a ſmile, and diſappeared. As ſhe went, Lady Broke opened the manuſcript, and having run over a page, exclaimed, "No, I'm wrong; I ought to read the piece firſt, and then you know you will have it all in your mind, and be able to ſuppoſe the different ſituations as you look at the

the ſtage; yes, I'll read it firſt." She had not got through the *Dramatis Perſonæ*, and ſuch explanations as ſhe thought neceſſary to give me for the better underſtanding of the piece, when the three damſels came in. "I have changed my mind, girls," ſaid her ladyſhip, "I am going to read the maſk firſt: you may ſtay if you like to hear it again. Should you like to hear me read it once more?" Urania ſaid it was impoſſible to hear it too often: *impoſſible* was echoed by Flora, and re-echoed by Iris, though they declared that they had every word of it by heart. Lady Broke ſmiled and bade them ſit down. She then read: 'The Birth-day—a Maſk. The curtain draws up, and diſcovers Ar-

cadian ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes dancing on mount Ida to celebrate the birth-day of Daphne. Aurora paſſes along the ſummit of the mountain, and as ſhe diſappears, the chariot of the ſun riſes gradually, till at length Apollo is ſeen in full glory.'—" There's a ſcene for you," cried her ladyſhip, " what do you think of that ſcene?"—" Admirable!" was my reply. Let thoſe who, through a juſt abhorrence of flattery, would in my poſition have told the lady that a group of Arcadians were not likely to be collected on the mountain ſhe had choſen for them, condemn my want of virtue, as I now do, and the whole part I aſſumed in order to ingratiate myſelf with Lady Broke; for I own I ſuddenly

denly became wicked enough to ſee the ſpires of Oxford peeping over Ida; and could I object to a lady's tranſporting a few animated beings ſo little a way as from the Peloponneſus acroſs the Ægean ſea in a mythological veſſel, when I had diſlodged churches and colleges from their foundations in England, and rebuilt them in the air over an heathen mount at about ten times the diſtance?—"Admirable!" ſaid I. "I was certain you would think ſo:" cried her ladyſhip, her eyes ſparkling with delight. She then caſt a look over the page, and ſuddenly exclaimed—"I knew I was right before—you ought to ſee the ſtage firſt—there is a direction comes in ſoon, which you will not be able to under-

ſtand—we will go firſt, and read afterwards: what do you ſay, Flora?"—"Oh! I think ſo, my lady;" replied Flora, "for then Mr. Edward will underſtand."—"But then," ſaid her ladyſhip, "it is as yet in the rough; I had better endeavour to explain as I read; what do you think, Urania?"—"Certainly, my lady," replied Urania, "and beſides there's nobody there juſt now to move the machinery."—"But that's nothing," ſaid her ladyſhip, "we can have plenty of people in a minute: what think you, Iris?"—"Dear me, my lady, plenty;" replied Iris: "ſhall I go for Thomas, and deſire Mr. Radley to ſend the carpenters from their dinners?"—"I know what I'll do," ſaid her ladyſhip, who had not paid the

ſlighteſt

ſlighteſt attention to Iris's anſwer—"I have it—I'll take the maſk with me, and read it there; for, being on the ſpot, every thing will of courſe be clear." Saying which, ſhe put the manuſcript into my hand, and led the way.

As ſhe walked, ſhe continued talking to me; at times directing my attention by her hand to the beauties her tongue was too much engaged to mention. "That aqueduct," ſaid ſhe, "is all my own taſte; for you muſt know I have a great deal of taſte. Nobody but me would ever have thought of conveying the water over that rock. I ſhould not have enjoyed the beautiful caſcade that falls at my door, if I had not had taſte. I think

an arcade is the moſt elegant object in nature: how do you like thoſe arches? Flora told me you were delighted with the dairy; but we are not going there, we turn to the left. *There*," continued ſhe, pointing, as we turned, to a mock ſteeple, at the end of a walk ſo little removed as to defy illuſion; "*there*, nobody can deny me taſte; that was entirely my doing." It was fortunate for me that Lady Broke took my admiration for granted, and conceived her queſtions anſwered without my opening my lips. She went on from object to object, abſorbed in her own talk, and occaſionally aſſuring me of her taſte. Her nymphs walked near, attending to her, and diſplaying their graces and emotions.

We

We now approached the *al fresco* theatre. It was a ſtage under a large awning, extended on lofty wooden pillars. In front were ſeats and muſic-deſks for muſicians, ſunk ſufficiently not to interrupt the view of the ſpectators, who were to be diſpoſed of at a little diſtance from the curtain, on riſing benches in the open air, or ſtanding for ſuch as choſe it, on the turf, before the building. I found the preparations much farther advanced than I expected from what I had heard. The erection of the theatre having been left to the direction of the property-man of the Exeter company of comedians, exhibited ſome elegance, and advantage had been taken of the garden ſcenery, by opening the back of the ſtage, where

Diana was to be ſeen paſſing on horſeback with her hounds. Lady Broke, in pointing this out, and deſcribing the nature of the ſcenes that were to be brought from Exeter in the courſe of the week, completely unfolded the beginning, middle, and end of her maſk; and a motley combination it was, of the moſt commonplace mythological images. As the ſun riſes, Daphne, with her parents and friends, joins the Arcadian perſonages on Ida, who leave off their dancing, and hail her with a chorus. Apollo, dazzled with her beauty, ſtops his chariot, admires, and is enamoured. The God of day then haſtens to finiſh his journey, and finding the other ſuperior gods and goddeſſes aſſembled on Olympus, makes

makes a rapturous report of Daphne's beauty. He excites a deſire in Juno, Minerva, Venus, and Diana to ſee her, and Jupiter ſwears he will be of the party. Iris is diſpatched to apprize the young lady of this intended viſit from the celeſtials, and finds her, at the cloſe of the day, ſtill on Ida among the Arcadians, who on being informed of this honour, ſing another chorus on the occaſion, to conclude the act. The ſecond act uſhers in the night with the moon, as the firſt had done the day with the ſun. The Arcadians are again aſſembled forming a retinue for Daphne, who makes ſome reflections on the beauty of the moon, when Mercury enters to announce Jupiter, Apollo, and the goddeſſes.

They are all aſtoniſhed, and celeſtial compliments paſs in abundance, mixed with a little envy. The goddeſſes then give her advice in character, in conſequence of which, ſome altercation takes place among them, and they retire leſs pleaſed than they entered. Jupiter is forced away by Juno, but Apollo lingers behind, determining to ſeize and carry off Daphne to mount Olympus. This Diana perceives, and reſolves to prevent. Apollo, however, being left alone with Daphne, ſings her a love ſong, and then retires to watch his opportunity. Diana returns, and tells the nymph of her danger, adviſing her to ſteal off immediately, and go home. The heroine obeys, and the Arcadians, rambling to the other ſide

ſide of the mountain, the coaſt is left clear for a change of the ſcene: the mountain is removed, and the viſta completely opened to the trees and ſhrubs at the back of the theatre, where the real moon being at its full, ſhines brilliantly on the ſurrounding objects. Diana on horſeback, with her dogs, is diſcovered at the end among the ſhrubs, anxious to counteract Apollo. In front of the ſtage, Daphne is ſeen alone haſtening home with timid ſteps. Soon after ſhe diſappears, Apollo enters in purſuit of her, and croſſes the ſtage. Diana diſmounts and comes up to the front. At the end Daphne is ſeen flying from Apollo; ſhe makes a turn, by which he loſes ſight of her, and ſhe has time to come up to Diana, whoſe

aid ſhe implores, and is hid by her among ſome laurels, juſt as Apollo appears again in ſight. The enamoured God advances at full ſpeed, and being aſſured by the goddeſs that the object of his purſuit is changed into a laurel, droops his head, and breaks off a branch of the tree, with which he retires. By this time Daphne's parents and the Arcadians are come in ſearch of her. She is called from the laurels by her celeſtial protectreſs, and reſtored to her anxious friends who finiſh the piece with a joyous chorus.

In gradually betraying the ſecrets of her drama, Lady Broke entered into prolix explications, demanded praiſe by the queſtions ſhe put to me, though

though ſhe ſeldom waited for a reply, and was redundant to a ridiculous exceſs in aſſuring me that ſhe poſſeſſed taſte. Having walked over the theatre, and made all her obſervations, ſhe again changed her mind as to the place of reading, which was at laſt determined ſhould be the china-room, for there the maſk would not be interrupted, as it was liable to be at the theatre, whither the workmen would ſoon be repairing from their dinner, and every part of it would now be perfectly underſtood.

The piece being read, and the nymphs withdrawn, her ladyſhip informed me that it was differently caſt to what was at firſt intended: that

that Miſs Broke was to have perſonated Daphne, but that proving too giddy (being only ſixteen laſt year) to retain her part, which ſhe no ſooner learned than ſhe forgot, Urania was to undertake it. The part of Apollo was firſt meant for her brother Mr. Broke, but Nick's retentive powers were ſtill inferior to his ſiſter's, beſides he had a trick of laughing where he ſhould not. It then fell to Mr. Dalby, but he too begged to decline it after the part had been in his hands a fortnight, as Miſs Broke was not to be the Daphne. "Now," added her ladyſhip, "it comes to you, and I am glad of it, for though I think Mr. Dalby a pretty poet, I am as well pleaſed that my Apollo ſhould be in your hands. All the

the other characters have been disposed of for some time. Iris is to be Iris, and Flora in trowsers, with—what do you call them?—wings to her heels—what do you call them?" She paused for a reply, I was half afraid to tell her— "Don't you know?" said she; "Mr. Dalby mentioned them the other day." Still more afraid that she might think ignorance of this kind a great defect in a scholar, which she supposed me to be, and recollecting, at the same time the poet's couplet:

Men should be taught as if you taught them
not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot—

I said: "A moment's reflection will bring

bring to your ladyſhip's mind the *Petaſus* and *Talaria* of Mercury." —" O yes," ſaid ſhe, " in a moment I ſhould have remembered the names of his feet-wings and wand: with theſe and his winged cap—what do you call that?" Driven by this queſtion to a *ne plus ultra*, I was under the neceſſity of taking off her attention from her error by huddling the terms together, ſaying; " I obſerve your ladyſhip means that ſhe ſhall be completely equipped as Mercury, with his petaſus, or winged cap; talaria, or heel-wings; and caduceus, or wand." — " Exactly ſo," replied Lady Broke, who in this little mythological chace had loſt the thread of her diſcourſe, " Flora is to be Mercury. All the other parts are

diſ-

difpofed of among my friends, who infifted that I fhould take that of Venus upon myfelf. I have engaged fome of the under-players at Exeter to be the Arcadians, and to form, befides, dancing and finging groups, in different parts of the grounds, which will be beautifully illuminated. How do you like the mafk? You obferve what a pleafing turn I give to the old ftory; for I could not really metamorphofe my heroine into a tree without a melancholy cataftrophe, which would not fuit a birth-day; and befides, how much more fimple and elegant is it to conceal her among laurels, ey?"

I was now completely afloat in the ftream of dependence, where I fhould foon have funk, had I difdained to

uſe the bladders of flattery that were to ſupport me in it. My lips began to be familiar with the word *admirable*, my replies ſatisfied her ladyſhip, and ſhe gave me the maſk to copy my part, telling me that I had a fortnight to make myſelf maſter of it, though ſhe wiſhed I could be ready for a rehearſal in a few days. This I promiſed to be, and a circular letter was immediately diſpatched to all the amateur performers, inviting them to meet on Tueſday in the enſuing week, and ſpend the day at Broke-Hall. Mr. Radley, the butler, was ſent for, and enjoined to ſee that the works were completed directly, and the remaining ſcenes immediately brought from Exeter. As Radley was leaving the room, Lady Broke ſaid

ſaid to him; "You will ſee Mr. Morland taken care of, and made as comfortable as you can, Radley, in your department."—"Certainly, my Lady:" replied the Butler, eyeing me from head to foot as he went out.

Finding myſelf in her ladyſhip's good graces, I took the opportunity to ſpeak for poor Thomas, and had the ſatisfaction to ſucceed. She conſented to keep him on my account, and deſired that I would employ him to do every thing I wanted. This ſucceſs emboldened me to ſpeak alſo for Murphy, which led to a diſcovery of my own knowledge of muſic; for though Apollo had deſcended from Mr. Dalby to me, her ladyſhip had

had taken my vocal capacity for granted. Her delight on hearing that I underſtood muſic, that I ſung, played on the piano, and had been practiſing the lute, was evinced in a manner not entirely ſuitable to her previous dignity. It was expreſſed in language far more condeſcending and familiar than I could have expected, and ſhe deſired me to bring both Murphy and the lute to Brokehall as ſoon as I could. I ſaid that if it were not for loſing time, I would go to Exeter immediately, but that, if her ladyſhip would ſuffer me to ſend Thomas, it would anſwer as well. She told me I might do as I pleaſed with Thomas, and bade me deſire him to take the horſe he uſually rode on her buſineſs.

On

On leaving the china-room, I went in queſt of Flora to find Thomas, and to obtain a little knowledge of the houſe. Sir Nicholas and Mr. Broke being out riding, and Miſs Broke on a ſhort viſit; my little conductreſs took the opportunity of ſhowing me the manſion. It is not neceſſary to enter into a minute deſcription of it; the modern building was ſpacious and elegant, and the caſtle, though neglected, appeared to have been magnificent. The family eſtabliſhment was very large: about the offices, I ſaw a great many domeſtics, and among them Thomas, whom I accoſted and deſired to come to my room, whither, after thanking Flora, I repaired to write to Murphy. Thomas was overjoyed at the tidings

I imparted, and declared that he ſhould be happy to wait upon me as long as he lived. "To be ſure, Mr. Morland," ſaid he, "it is a good place to live in; but I muſt ſay, Sir, though I hope you will take no farther notice of it, that the family be the moſt comical, rumbuſtical, odd folks I ever did ſee. I muſt ſay, howſomever, that my lady's vagaries are all nothing at all, or funny enough for a man to think upon apart; but I hate a down-look and a diſcontented ſoul like Sir Nicholas's: he never do laugh or ſmile except when he be toxicated with liquor, but always look as black and ſulky as a culprit going to be hanged." I reprimanded him for ſpeaking irreverently of his employers. "I never do, Mr.

Morland," replied he, "but I don't know how it is, your goodneſs to me opened the door of my heart, and ſo what was in would out." I gave him credit for this, as I remembered that he was more on the reſerve when I firſt talked with him. Indeed I found him to be ſtrictly obſervant of his duty, and a faithful ſervant in ſpite of the juſt opinion he had formed of the Broke family, which laid the foundation of my attachment to him. I kept him in my room while I wrote a few lines to Murphy, deſiring him not to fail coming early the next day to Broke-Hall, and to bring his violin and the lute I had returned.

Having

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI ... ORE

Having diſpatched Thomas, I joined Flora and her companions, and we ſoon after went to dinner in the Butler's refectory, where I partook of a repaſt more ſuited to provoke appetite than allay hunger, during which, Mr. Radley invited me to challenge the ladies to take wine, and at the ſame time ſet me the example. In the courſe of the meal, and a very ſhort time after the cloth was removed, we finiſhed a bottle, and Radley would have opened another, had I not proteſted againſt it on account of the taſk I had undertaken. Finding it was not through ſqueamiſhneſs, he permitted me to retire, ſaying to me ſignificantly as I put my hand upon the lock of the door; " on this ſide, good-fellowſhip and ſound corks; on the

the other, *mum*." The eyes of the females were upon me, their ſmiles ſupported the butler's ſentiment, I therefore ſmiled likewiſe, and echoed his *mum*, as I left the room. My prudence did not ſtifle my ſurpriſe, and I arrived at my room throwing up my eyes and hands as the force of reflection acted on my muſcles. The butler was a pleaſant fellow, and perhaps the converſation at his table was equal, if not ſuperior, to the general caſt of that at the firſt table, and I had but one objection to the enjoyment it afforded; it was ſeized by ſtealth, it was a want of fidelity, a breach of truſt: a ſtale crumb ſoaked in water was therefore preferable. Be this as it may, I found myſelf involved in the butler's confidence,

and at firſt I was at a loſs how to act, but I concluded with a determination to open the baronet's eyes, if I found him deſerving of it. Meanwhile I applied myſelf to the performance of my engagement with Lady Broke; I copied my part from her manuſcript, and ſtudied it, as the phraſe is, ſo aſſiduouſly, that I was ſoon maſter of it. The ſongs interſperſed through the piece I found adapted to old popular airs, and thoſe not badly ſelected; for, the vulgar ear, however ignorant of the rules of harmony, is ever juſt in its choice of melody.

I ſaw no more of Lady Broke the firſt day. She ordered the carriage after dinner, and went out with her

her ſon to make a viſit to a family who were her chief aſſiſtants on this grand occaſion. In the evening I ſtrolled alone, with my part of Apollo in my hand, through the grounds, and, making a circle, approached the theatre by the lawn at the bottom of it. The ſun was but juſt ſet, the fine twilight of the ſeaſon had ſcarcely begun to caſt its brown ſhade upon the ſurrounding objects, a dead ſilence reigned, not a leaf was ſtirring: the workmen had quitted their labour, their working table and tools remained on the ſtage; I walked through the wooden intricacies that were to form the ſimple aſcent of a mountain, and advanced to the front of the building, when I ſaw two perſons ſtanding at a little diſtance apparently

rently in converſation reſpecting the preparations for the feſtival. They approached without perceiving me; I had taken a ſeat on a ſtool at the ſide-door. The two men entered on the oppoſite ſide, when one of them proceeded down the ſtage without looking my way, while the other ſtood gazing at me with terror as if I had been a phantom, on which I roſe and went forward a few ſteps. "Keep off, keep off," cried he, in a loud but tremulous voice, "what are you? what do you want?" The affrighted wretch ſhook every limb. "Speak," added he, "what do you want?" —"I am nothing," replied I, "and want nothing."—"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed he, "have mercy on me!" By this time, the other perſon

ſon returned, and I recognized him to be Mr. Radley; but how great was my ſurpriſe on finding that the man whom the ſudden ſight of me had ſo terrified was Sir Nicholas Broke himſelf. "Are you ill, Sir Nicholas?" cried Radley, running up to him. Sir Nicholas kept his eyes fixed upon me, at the ſame time aſking Radley if he ſaw nothing. "Yes, Sir Nicholas," replied he, "I ſee Mr. Edward, my lady's ſecretary." —"Secretary!" ſaid the Baronet in a lower tone, ſtill looking at me, and gradually recovering himſelf, "are you ſure of that?"—"O yes, Sir Nicholas," anſwered the butler, "he dined with me to day."—"I knew he was to come," ſaid Sir Nicholas, "but I thought not till next week."

He ſtill eyed me, yet ſuffered me to make a ſecond bow before he ſpoke to me. Indeed it was ſome time before he was ſufficiently compoſed. He then aſked me my name, and where I came from. I told him my name was Edward Morland, and that I came from Berkſhire. After a ſhort pauſe, during which his eyes continued riveted on me, he aſked me if I had a part in Lady Broke's maſk, to which I replied that her ladyſhip had done me the honour to appoint me one. He was now ſo much recovered as to ſpeak with eaſe. "I have no doubt," ſaid he, "you will do it juſtice." He then put ſome trivial queſtions, and went on with Radley. As he did not deſire my attendance, I preſumed not

to follow him: they went through the theatre, and I ſoon loſt ſight of them.

At ſupper, where I again ſat down with the ſame meſſmates, I learned that theſe fits of terror were not uncommon with Sir Nicholas, though the knowledge of them was confined as much as poſſible to the family. The girls ſaid they were ſure he believed in ghoſts, and the butler declared he had never ſeen him ſo ſhaken before. "They ſay he is nervous," continued he, "but, for my part, I think it's a bad conſcience."

CHAP. XXI.

A Brother and Siſter.—Murphy at Broke-Hall.—An Accident, by which Morland's Intereſt is promoted.—A Secret of the ſecond Table.—Mr. Dalby.—A Trick on the Poet, who repoſes Confidence in Morland.—The Rehearſal. Fun.—Qui vult decipi decipiatur.

THE next day made me acquainted with more of the family, for Miſs Broke had returned the evening before with her mother, and both ſhe and the young ſquire were conſtantly running about the houſe like two young greyhounds at play. There was a ſtriking reſemblance between the

the brother and ſiſter both in face and manner; they were neither handſome nor ugly, but the vivacity of youth would have turned the ſcale in favour of the former, had it not been counterbalanced by folly; they both of them laughed whenever they ſpoke, and at whatever they did not underſtand; he was rude and boiſterous, ſhe forward and a hoyden; he loved to make fun, and ſhe to enjoy it; he was nearly as feeble in his perſon as in his intellect, ſhe was ſtout, paſſionate, and cunning.

Murphy having been punctual to the appointment I made for him, I went to Lady Broke with the maſk, and obtained her permiſſion to carry him to the muſic-room. She gave

me the muſic of the maſk copied fairly, with her own words to the airs, and told me that ſhe would be with us in a few minutes. I accordingly conducted my muſician with our inſtruments, the lute and violin, to the room, where I opened a very fine-toned piano; but, alas! it was miſerably out of tune. Fortunately, Murphy, who taught the piano, could tune it, and I returned to Lady Broke to delay her coming till he had done it. While I was with her ladyſhip ſhe informed me that Sir Nicholas was at times extremely nervous, and deſired that I would take no notice of what had happened the evening before. She then told me that he had paſſed a bad night, and had riſen early to take a long ride, which was al-

ways

ways of ſervice to him. From this ſhe went to the ſubject of the maſk: was in raptures on my reciting a great portion of my part, and when I ſaid I hoped to obtain her approbation, when the piano was ready, in the ſongs that fell to me, I thought ſhe would have forgotten herſelf, and embraced me. She rung the bell, and deſired Flora, who attended, to ſend Miſs Broke to the muſic-room, whither ſhe was going herſelf, adding that ſhe ſhould alſo want Daphne, Iris, and Mercury.

There was no occaſion to ſend for Miſs Broke, no ſooner had the ſounds of the piano reached the ears of the brother and ſiſter than they ran to ſee who was at it, and we

found them perplexing Murphy with their noiſe and tricks. His repeated, "pray ſir, pray miſs," were of little avail, and Lady Broke was under the neceſſity of interfering to keep them quiet till the inſtrument was in tune. Her ladyſhip then deſired me to take the ſeat at the piano: the tone of it was very fine, and I had great pleaſure in playing an extempore prelude. This brought in the damſels, and Murphy, having tuned his violin, accompanied me by his ear as I ſang one of Apollo's ſongs to the old tune of Gramachree. If I had had any muſical vanity, I might have piqued myſelf on Lady Broke's ecſtaſy, the attention of her ſon and daughter, and the ejaculated, "Dear!" of her nymphs;

nymphs; but I never confidered mufic as a fit fubject of ambition; I efteemed it folely as a means of pleafure, whether I performed or liftened, and I hope I fhall not be thought moft vain in faying for myfelf that my heart was little contaminated with vanity of any kind. I was early actuated by the intrinfic value of things, and always feparated it from the falfe glare reflected by felf. If, however, there was no vanity excited by the praifes of Lady Broke, I confefs they infufed another felfifh feeling into my mind, and the high-ftreet of Oxford edged the gentle curve of the inftrument before me. Indulging this felfifh feeling, I opened the book at the beginning, and went through every ditty and madrigal

gal to the end, calling upon the damsels to ſing what was allotted to them, which, being airs they had warbled from their cradles, they executed without any difficulty. Murphy played extempore accompaniments throughout, with great taſte; and in ſinging I took care to expreſs the words very diſtinctly. I really believe it was one of the happieſt mornings in the life of Lady Broke, who regretted again and again that Mr. Dalby was not preſent.

One of my principal objects being to eſtabliſh Murphy at Broke-Hall as a teacher, I took the liberty of requeſting that Miſs Broke might play to him. As the young lady was not burdened with *mauvaiſe*

honte,

bonte, the requeſt was eaſily obtained. The girl was not devoid of talent, but it had not been properly cultivated. Murphy threw in inſtructions modeſtly enough, and ſo well timed as to produce their effect. The reſult was that he was engaged to attend her three times a week, at five ſhillings a leſſon, and his horſe-hire. The enſuing Monday was appointed for the firſt leſſon, and he was deſired to keep himſelf diſengaged on Tueſday alſo, that he might aſſiſt at the rehearſal. I was highly delighted with my ſucceſs in ſerving this young man, and could ſcarcely have felt more pleaſure at a preſentation to a benefice for myſelf. After taking ſome refreſhment he left the Hall, his tongue overflowing with the

the language of gratitude for the services I had rendered him, and I devoted the reft of the day in making myfelf a finifhed Apollo, Lady Broke having enjoined me to be ready for the rehearfal on Tuefday.

The day fucceeding that on which my intereft had been fo increafed by the piano-forte, produced an unexpected occurrence that gave it a rife ftill more rapid, in the very channel to which my views were directed. It was Sunday. The family were punctual in their attendance at church, for whatever was the degree of faith refpectively placed by the heads of it in the articles of religion, both Sir Nicholas and his lady were fully impreffed with the utility of

of example in the ſupport of due ſubordination among the lower claſſes of ſociety. As the church was ſeveral miles diſtant, it was neceſſary to uſe carriages for thoſe who went to it: there were always two, and often three. Informed of the cuſtom, I this day took a ſeat with my companions of the ſecond table, in an open vehicle in which there was a range of benches for the accomodation of a greater number of perſons than is afforded by a coach. We followed the baronet's coach and ſix, in which the father, mother, ſon, and daughter were ſeated. Juſt as they paſſed the porter's lodge, one of the hind ſprings ſnapped, and the corner of the body fell with a violent jerk, on the perch; the ſudden motion and the inclining poſition

of

of the carriage frightened the good people within. Lady Broke ſcreamed for help, Sir Nicholas roared to be let out. In an inſtant there were upwards of a dozen perſons about the door, and the family were extricated without any injury. As ſoon as young Broke and his ſiſter were out of danger, they began to laugh, and to enjoy the accident as a piece of fun; but it was ſome time before Sir Nicholas and Lady Broke recovered from the agitation into which they had been thrown; and all thoughts of proceeding to church being abandoned, the whole cavalcade returned to the houſe on foot.

On entering, her ladyſhip, who had been propoſing it to the baronet, aſked

aſked me if I would undertake to read the ſervice, and a ſermon to the family. I readily aſſented. All the domeſtics were ſummoned to the parlour; on a table, conveniently placed, were laid the large family bible and prayer-book, and Flora brought me a ſmall, elegantly bound duodecimo of ſermons, telling me that her lady had marked the one ſhe wiſhed me to read. Some old velvet cuſhions that had been in the caſtle for ſeveral generations were placed near another table for Sir Nicholas, his lady, and the young Brokes. On the oppoſite ſide of the room, a little lower down, her ladyſhip's nymphs, and Mr. Radley were ſtationed, and at the bottom the ſervants aſſembled. Had I been able

to

to confider this little congregation as an affemblage of beings cheerfully devout, who had refolved not to let an accident prevent their uniting in grateful praifes of the Supreme Being, I fhould have fhared the genuine enthufiafm; but when I faw in an outward act of worfhip the means of adding fecurity to worldly exaltation, when I confidered it as a mere wheel in the machine of temporal affairs, may I not forgive myfelf if, in this one inftance, I too loft fight of the proper object of the meeting, and prayed and preached with a zeal infpired by felf-intereft? The fervice was a combination of various idolatry. The heads of the houfe bowed the knee to pride and rank, the dependants to good places,

places, and the lecturer, alas! to a will o' the wisp. I had got nearly half through the service, when the young squire, for whom I had waited till his mother desired me to begin, opened the door and came in. His entrance caused a bustle among the servants in making way for him: he had a grin upon his countenance, and I saw him thrust his tongue into his cheek as he looked at one of the grooms. I was upon the point of being disconcerted, but was relieved by observing that the general fixed attention I had excited, was not interrupted by the squire, who walked up to his sister, by whom he sat down, repeating to her the elegant grimace with which he had honoured the groom. Miss Broke's giggle, re-

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI

reſtrained from being audible by a bite of her lips, ſhowed itſelf in the inflation of her cheeks and the motion of her ſhoulders. I began to be afraid that I ſhould not ſtand this double battery; but feeling that I had a great deal at ſtake, I ſummoned all my reſolution, and proceeded, ſupported by the evident progreſs I was making in the mind of their mother. When it was proper to kneel, the young ſquire, as if aſhamed of the attitude, continued ſitting, his elbow on the table, and his chin ſupported by his hand doubled, over which his lips appeared drawn ſometimes in between his teeth, and ſometimes puſhed forward, the upper one ſtrained cloſe to his noſtrils: but his mother's looks repaid me for his grimaces. As for Sir

Sir Nicholas, he never once took his eyes off me: ſitting, kneeling, or ſtanding, he ſeemed not to have the power of removing them; but they turned up unnaturally from beneath his brow, for the reſt of his countenance drooped, and he had, as Thomas expreſſed himſelf, a down look, in ſpite of their raiſed direction. Lady Broke occaſionally whiſpered him a few words, which he returned with a nod, and I properly placed both to the account of my own idol.

When I opened the duodecimo delivered to me by Flora, I found it to be a volume of Sterne's ſermons, and was not a little ſurpriſed, conſidering the feſtival in preparation,

to find my text to be; *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning than to go to the houſe of feaſting.* My ſurpriſe, however, ended with the three firſt words of the ſermon, which are, *That I deny.* I then ſaw that the quaintneſs, not to ſay irreverence of this abrupt opening, ſuited her ladyſhip's taſte, and had recommended it to her choice on this occaſion. In my opinion, however, nothing that ſucceeded in the ſermon, could atone for this falſe and ill-placed humour, which brought to my mind a remark upon Sterne I had ſomewhere read, that, whatever were his merits, he always ſeemed ready to throw his wig at you from the pulpit. Be this as it may, I gave his ſermon all the energy I could, and, though no advocate

vocate for aĉtion in the pulpit, I yielded in this inſtance to the taſte of my patroneſs, and threw in ſo much emotion and geſture that I more than once bluſhed for myſelf before the ſermon was ended. However, the effeĉt propoſed was attained; for when I attended Lady Broke in her boudoir, about an hour after, ſhe gave me her opinion upon the frigid and the animated manner of delivering diſcourſes, aſſured me that I *had given* Yorick in a better ſtyle than any clergyman ſhe ever heard, and concluded with ſaying it was a great pity I had been obliged to quit the walk I had originally taken—"but," added ſhe, ſinking her voice, and ſpeaking, as if to herſelf, "that may yet be remedied." Had the ſen-

tence been unequivocally addreffed to me, and fpoken through a trumpet, I could not have heard it better, or collected a furer prefage. It gave an active impulfe to my imagination, which was no longer bounded to preparatory ftudies, but took its flight the full length of the Vicar of Holcomb's prediction.

Anxious to lofe no ground, I went to my room and employed myfelf in getting Apollo by heart till dinner-time, when I joined my table affociates, and was more regaled by their flattering reports than by the delicate repaft of which I partook. From the butler I learned that Sir Nicholas himfelf had joined in my praife, in fpite of his being more hipped than

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he had ſeen him for a long while. "He has been ſpeaking to me a good deal about you," continued Radley, "and has commiſſioned me to enquire of you very particularly reſpecting your parents, what ſituation they are in, and how you come to have ſuch a good education." I aſſured Radley that I had nothing to add to what I had already related to Lady Broke; that I was ready to repeat it to Sir Nicholas, and to anſwer all his queſtions whenever he thought proper to honour me with his commands. "He has company dining with him," ſaid the butler, "but I make no doubt he will have ſome converſation with you ſoon." We all then talked of the preparations for the birth-day, and of the re-

hearſal appointed for Tueſday. The damſels were anxious leſt I ſhould not be ready in my part, as I had had ſo ſhort a time to ſtudy it; and they were aſtoniſhed to hear that I was then ready for a rehearſal. After dinner the butler's heart was open, and he ſaid he had a treat for us, putting on the table a bottle of wine of a fine deep red colour. "This, Mr. Edward," ſaid he, "is a favourite ſtuff of ours, but it is too rare for us to indulge in often; help the ladies and yourſelf, and give me your opinion of it." The ladies with one voice ſaid it was excellent ſtuff. Having taſted it, I ſaid I thought it delicious, but at the ſame time confeſſed that I had never met with any before. "No wonder,"

ſaid

ſaid the butler, " there's not much of of it in England, nay, I may ſay in Europe, or France itſelf. This, Sir, is the genuine Hermitage: isn't it of an exquiſite flavour? Come, fill again, you will judge better on a ſecond glaſs." All the glaſſes were again filled, and being of a capacious ſize, left but little of the precious ſtuff in the bottle. The butler proceeded deſcanting on the delicacy and *elegance* of the wine, and had juſt put his hand on the bottle to fill a third time, when a footman in livery, after tapping at the door, came in, bowed, and ſaid that Sir Nicholas, had ſent him for a couple of bottles of hermitage. " Hermitage!" cried the butler. " Why, man, Sir Nicholas forgets I told him there was no more in the

the cellar a month ago. I can't give him what I haven't got," continued he, winking his eye at us; "go, and tell him he has had the laſt bottle of the old batch, and that the lot he bought at Plymouth is not come in yet." The man bowed and withdrew; the butler filled his glaſs and went on: "if gentlemen will neglect to provide in time they can't complain if they go without the article. I always make it a rule to give ſufficient notice. Indeed, of moſt other liquors we have generally freſh ſtores put in long before it comes to their turn; but for this and a few more articles we are ſometimes obliged to wait an opportunity to get the real ſtuff. Come, the bottle's with you." Taking the decanter

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in my hand, I began to meaſure the quantity with my eyes, that I might divide it. "O!" cried he, "there is not above a glaſs." I ſaid I thought there was. "Buz!" bawled the butler, "and the ladies ſhall have the firſt of the next bottle." Smack went the freſh cork as I filled my bumper. "One isn't a taſte," ſaid the god of the cellar, "and as we don't drink it often we never ſtop at leſs than two. I have half a dozen more in reſerve—come, Miſs M'Carthy, allow me — Miſs Anderſon, your glaſs — Mr. Edward, help Miſs Fudge." We finiſhed the bottle, and Mr. Radley would have brought a third, but the ladies proteſting againſt it, we roſe and retired to our different apartments and occupations.

I was fully reſolved to betray the butler's confidence, yet, on reflexion, I became ſenſible that it was neceſſary for me to act with great caution, for Lady Broke's favourite nymphs were his accomplices, and in expoſing them, I might in the end be myſelf the victim: now, to riſk a pulpit in order to ſave Sir Nicholas a few bottles of wine required deliberation, and prudence demanded of principle time to proceed with ſafety.

Engroſſed by Lady Broke and Apollo, I had, fortunately for my ſpirits, little time to pine over the event that had accelerated my ſettlement at Broke-Hall; yet Affington and the Joneses now and then ſtole into my thoughts, and arreſted my progreſs

progrefs in fubfervience to Folly for a few minutes, till recollection impelled me on. They occupied my mind the greater part of Sunday night, and as I thought it probable that Jones would write again to me, I requefted Murphy the next day, after he had given Mifs Broke her leffon, to enquire both at Affington and the Exeter poft-office for letters for me.

It was while Mifs Broke was at the piano, accompanied by her new mafter, that I firft had the honour of feeing Lady Broke's clever friend the ingenious Mr. Dalby. He entered gently, on tiptoe, unannounced, making a fign with his hand to Lady Broke not to interrupt the mufic. I had heard only of his talents, not

a word of his perſon, though certainly there was much more to boaſt of in the latter than in the former, had it not been abuſed by affectation and ſelf-conceit. He had good features, a good complexion, and his hair waved handſomely round his forehead; he was above the middle ſize and well-proportioned; yet theſe advantages were impaired by the conſequential air, and decided tone that accompanied them. "Braviſſima! Divine!" exclaimed he at the concluſion of the ſtrain: then addreſſing Lady Broke by the initial letter of her name, as was his cuſtom among his friends; "My dear Lady B.," cried he, "Miſs B. excels herſelf to-day. That's a charming piece, Sir," continued he, turning to Murphy,

"and

"and you play extremely well, indeed, except that you now and then drowned Miſs B's charming paſſages with your inſtrument; pray avoid that, and I aſſure you you play very well indeed." Murphy, who knew what paſſages of Miſs Broke's playing to drown, and what to leave diſtinct, and who only refrained from ſtopping her ſpeed to direct her fingers becauſe he had ſeen the gentleman's ecſtaſy, bowed and ſmiled. Lady Broke ſeized the pauſe to tell Mr. Dalby of the advanced ſtate of the preparations, to mention me as his ſubſtitute in Apollo, and to make me go through ſome of the airs. "Very pretty, extremely pretty," were the expletives with which the poet honoured me; though all the time I

heard Lady Broke talking to him of me. After the ſongs ſhe deſired me to repeat ſome of the part I had ſtudied. I could not but comply. "Vaſtly well indeed!" ſaid the poet —"a little inſtruction would make you perfect. I'll be here early to-morrow and give you ſome hints previous to the rehearſal. Do not ſpeak ſo rapidly; and make more uſe of your left leg." I was confounded, bluſhed, and trembled for the reſult of this profound critic's judgment on my patroneſs's opinion, when, to my utter aſtoniſhment, I was relieved by a *bon mot* of Miſs Broke's, ſupported by her mother. During the poet's criticiſm, ſhe kept her eyes fixed upon me in a flattering manner, and no ſooner heard the coun-

counſel given for a greater uſe of the left leg than ſhe cried out, "dear me! who ever heard of a left-legged player before?" Lady Broke laughed, and I had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing my critic confounded and bluſh in his turn. "Nay, Miſs B., nay, my dear Lady B., you can't ſuppoſe I am ſo left-witted as to— ha! ha! ha!" The ladies joined with him in laughing at this new play upon the word, and the poet having produced all the effect he intended, never finiſhed his ſentence; but as ſoon as the laugh was over, ſaid abruptly: "I have the ſweeteſt little Italian ſonnet to ſhow you I ever read. Harry Harriſon, who you know is much among foreign conoſcenti, ſent it me in a letter which I received yeſterday." Lady Broke was

was eager to ſee it, and her friend gratified her immediately. As it proved of ſome uſe to me, I ſhall inſert it here:

Speſſo Amor ſotto la forma
D' Amiſta ride, e s'aſconde:
Poi ſi miſchia, e ſi confonde
Con lo ſdegno, e col rancor.
In pietade ei ſi trasforma,
Par traſtullo, e par diſpetto:
Ma nel ſuo diverſo aſpetto
Sempr' egli è l' iſteſſo Amor.

Lady Broke was highly delighted with it, having had occaſion to aſk the Engliſh of only three words. Neither Miſs Broke's opinion nor mine was taken upon it; ſhe, it was known, had never learned Italian, and I was not ſuſpected of it. Her

lady-

ladyſhip expreſſed a great deſire that Mr. Dalby would immediately turn it into Engliſh verſe: "you have ſuch an elegant pen, Dalby, and ſo ready." The flattered bard ſaid, that if I would give him pen and ink he would do it immediately. "You will oblige me much," cried Lady Broke, "and as I am wanted juſt now at the theatre, I will leave you with your muſe." I accordingly went out to get the materials, and was followed by Murphy, who promiſed to bring my letters the next day if there were any for me at Affington or Exeter. When I returned to the muſic-room Lady and Miſs Broke left it, and I was about to follow their example, having depoſited the pen, ink, and paper, but the poet deigned to call me back. "Mr.

"Mr. Edward," ſaid he, "pray ſtay. Your lady and I had a few words about you, while you were out of the room. You ſtand well, I aſſure you, and I ſhall be glad to be of any ſervice to you in the part you have undertaken. At preſent I muſt ſketch theſe lines for Lady B., but you may ſtay, for I ſhall pen them in a minute, and as her ladyſhip is engaged I will leave them with you to preſent to her. I aſked his permiſſion to look at the ſonnet? "Do you underſtand Italian?" cried he, with a look of ſurprize. I replied I did, a little. "Hah!" exclaimed he, I am glad of it, as you will be able to judge of the tranſlation I have made." The paſt tenſe of the verb was one of thoſe tributes which Falſehood often unexpectedly pays

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to Truth, but it was unobſerved by the ſpeaker, who, while he put into my hands the copy of the original he had ſhown to Lady Broke, ſaid he had another, from which he could tranſlate. This he took from his pocket, and, after two or three preſ-ſures of the forehead with his left hand, wrote off the tranſlation from beginning to end without once ſtop-ping. "*Stans pede in uno*," cried he, "for though I ſat I could have ſtood on one foot twice as long. He then read to me the following lines with ridiculous emphaſis:

Often Love under the ſhape
  Of Friendſhip laughs and hides:
Then like a ranc'rous little ape,
  Into ſpite and anger glides.

He

He ſometimes takes the form of Pity,
Now he's artful, now he's witty;
In all his forms, or gay or ſtupid,
Love is always pretty Cupid.

He ſaid he would be obliged to me to copy them fair for Lady B., for men of genius wrote execrable hands, and I might keep his for my trouble. He made ſome farther obſervations upon the rapid flow of verſification poſſeſſed by ſome pens; and while he talked I contrived to creep between him and the paper he had left on the table, from which, by flattering the rapidity of his muſe, I diverted his attention ſo completely, that he quitted the houſe without removing the proof of its ſluggiſhneſs.

The paper he forgot contained the foul copy, with its innumerable dashes, corrections, and variations, and under it the fair transcript from which the velocity of his pen intended to reap a triumph for the rapidity of his muse. I had it now in my power to revenge myself for his insolent attempt at instructing me before my patroness, and to do it completely I resolved to deliver to her a version of my own instead of his, without claiming them, and to see how he would act on the occasion when he found himself in this predicament. I accordingly avoided seeing Lady Broke till I had retired to my chamber and strung the following couplets:

Under Friendſhip's calmer form,
  Oft Love creeps to weave his wile:
Then unſeen he plies his charm,
  Veiling wings and wanton ſmile.

As in ſtrength the charm advances,
  See the urchin bolder grow;
Playing frowns and jealous fancies,
  Ah! too late we ſee the foe!

Now in Pity's form he works,
  See him ſport or anger move;
In what form ſoe'er he lurks,
  Love in all his ſhapes is Love.

Fly him raging, weeping fly,
  Nor his toying truſt to prove:
Now a frown and now a ſigh,
  Love in all his ſhapes is Love.

Theſe lines I put into an envelope and got Flora to carry them to Lady Broke,

Broke, to whom I begged her to reprefent me as fo engroffed with Apollo as to wifh not to be taken from him that evening. This fucceeded, I was left to myfelf, and I went to bed enjoying the dilemma into which the poet had been plunged by his vanity.

Tuefday was a bufy day, yet little occurred worthy of being recorded. I was a good deal difappointed that Murphy brought me no letter, but I was foon called from regret by the affembling of the company. I was honoured with attention, and fome unconnected fpouting was volunteered by feveral of her ladyfhip's friends, while the party waited for Mr. Dalby to proceed to the theatre,

where the rehearſal was to take place. At length he came to receive his new ſprig of laurel from Lady Broke ſurrounded by her friends, having purpoſely allowed them time to be collected before he made his appearance. He already felt it on his brow, he advanced gaily and with confidence, and was met with ſmiles by her ladyſhip, who introduced the ſonnet to her friends, with a preface on the rapidity of the tranſlation. As ſhe read the Italian, Dalby's face was illumined with joy and certain expectation. He looked round the company with a conſcious ſmile that anticipated applauſe, and when Lady Broke finiſhed the original, exclaimed in rapture, "how beautiful!"—"Beautiful!" was echoed by ſome

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of the circle. "Very;" ſaid her ladyſhip, "but I think it ſurpaſſed by the tranſlation: you will all ſay ſo."—"Oh! my dear Lady B.!" cried the happy bard, ſmiling, bowing his head from ſide to ſide, and preſſing his white handkerchief to his boſom. No ſooner, however, did her ladyſhip pronounce the firſt line than the ſmile forſook his cheek, his underlip became fixed and drawn to one ſide, while his eyes ſlowly moved round to catch mine. I own I enjoyed his confuſion. I ſaw he was at a loſs how to act. He continued looking at me, his features retaining their rigid poſition till at the end of the ſecond ſtanza, a general exclamation of "charming!" forced from him an involuntary ſmile and bow,

bow, ſuch as in his ſituation he may be imagined to have exhibited; immediately after which he reſumed his ſtare at me. At the third ſtanza his unhappy ears were aſſailed with, "beautiful, very beautiful!" Exclamations, undoubtedly intended more for the poet than the poetry, and which it was clear to me he would have received as his due with more eaſe had he not been conſcious that to one being preſent the truth was known: he therefore attempted to aſcertain whether my ſecrecy might be gained; he winked at me, ſmiled graciouſly, and put his finger on his lips as Lady Broke concluded, when, relieved by my returning his ſmile, he received the, "*admirable*!" that was echoed round, and the ſuc-

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ceſſive compliments of his friends with the utmoſt effrontery, till Lady Broke, to complete the climax of flattery, declared that it was not only the moſt rapid but the moſt ſucceſsful effuſion of his muſe; on which he bit his lip, drew up his noſe as if he had ſnuffed vinegar, and cocking one eye, turned the other aſlant on me to ſee whether I concurred in her ladyſhip's ſuffrage. I made him eaſy by ſeeming not to have attended to the obſervation, and he ſaid in a low voice, "I am extremely honoured by the partial opinion of a lady of ſuch exquiſite taſte."

The company now proceeded to the theatre; in the way to which Mr. Dalby found an opportunity to

take me aſide, and he began with a ſe-rious face to complain of the trick I had played him. "I am ſorry you think you have reaſon to complain, Sir," ſaid I, "I hoped from your adoption of the lines that you were pleaſed."—"Why, to be ſure," re-plied he, ſmoothing his countenance, "the lines are good lines; but then a— come, let us underſtand each other; we have both talents, and have both a point to gain. I ſee you are a gentleman; let us be friends and ſerve each other, what ſay you?" I ſaid I ſhould be glad to be of any ſervice to him. "Well, then," replied he, "tell me your object, and I'll tell you mine." I ſaid my only ob-ject was to acquire friends who might ſave me from ſinking into a ſtate be-neath

neath the education I had received. "A very proper and honourable object," cried he, "and be aſſured you ſhall have all the weight of my influence with Lady B., only take care you do not leſſen that weight. Your lines, without a compliment, are beautiful; ſo beautiful that I have no objection to let them paſs as mine. Thoſe that I wrote in a hurry," continued he, forgetting, or not knowing, that his laboured paper was in my poſſeſſion, "are by no means equal to them; and no wonder, you know, when you ſaw yourſelf how they were daſhed off. So let things ſtand as they are, and when Miſs B. is mine, for *her* hand is *my* object, you may depend upon ſomething, and that handſome, being done for you.

We will talk more by and by, at preſent we are both wanted to give poignancy to her ladyſhip's taſte. Saying which he ſkipped forward to join the party. "Alas!" cried I, as I walked ſlowly after him, "thou art doomed, Morland, to be involved in baſe confidences; theſe dilemmas are trials of thy virtue: thou knoweſt the right and the wrong, thou art to chuſe between them. The baronet's butler ſteals his wine, and his wife's poet is going to ſteal his daughter. Thy ſilence may be of advantage to thy views; but how wilt thou live with the demi-god that inhabits thy breaſt? What will become of the ſacred impreſſion with which thou ſetteſt out on the journey of life, and which has hitherto ſupported

ported thy ſpirits?" I concluded my ſhort ſoliloquy with determining to leave my views to the Diſpoſer of events, and to ſeek a proper occaſion to impeach the butler and the poet.

Arrived at the theatre I entered into the ſpirit and buſtle of the ſcene. Some muſical inſtruments had been carried up on the occaſion, and Murphy with ſeveral other muſicians placed themſelves in the orcheſtra. The ſcenery was read from the manuſcript and imagined, the dialogue was repeated with action, and th airs and choruſſes were regularly ſung and accompanied. When I came to the ſong which Apollo ſings to Daphne, I ventured, without appriz-

ing Lady Broke of my intention, to try the effect of one of my own melodies which I had purpofely adapted to the words. I had no other accompaniment than my lute, with which I had previoufly prepared myfelf. My effay was fuccefsful: the approbation of her ladyfhip and of her friends, was beftowed in the moft flattering manner, and after being encored, I was defired to introduce the air accompanied in the fame manner on the reprefentation of the mafk. Never was man fo puffed as I was on this occafion by the poet, whofe rapture even exceeded her ladyfhip's: not only in my fong, but almoft in every ftep I took he actively pointed out fomething to applaud, contriving, however, to make thefe praifes rebound

bound upon the elegant imagination of the dear Lady B., whoſe exquiſite compoſition had thrown ſuch ſoul into Apollo. Sir Nicholas and Mr. Broke were both preſent at the rehearſal. An immoveable gloom hung upon the baronet's countenance, and whenever I looked at him I caught his eyes fixed on me. The young ſquire was full of fun and was with difficulty reſtrained from throwing the whole party into confuſion. I obſerved Miſs Broke was leſs giddy than uſual, and that ſhe vied with her father in rivetting her eyes on me, while the poet courted a look in vain. Upon the whole the rehearſal promiſed well—all were perfect in their parts, and the characters tolerably well caſt, not excepting Lady

Broke's, for ſhe performed with ſpirit, and although Raphael would not have choſen her for a ſtudy of the Cyprian dame, two to one Rubens would. Imagining that Dalby would ſeek a private conference with me, when the piece was over, I determined to avoid him, and left the company as ſoon as I could, nor did I mix with them any more during the day.

From this time I was treated with great conſideration and even reſpect by every part of the family, the young ſquire excepted, who, though not uncivil, occaſionally attempted to play off ſome of his fun upon me. Fortunately his efforts all miſcarried, except in one inſtance. One evening, a ſnake

a ſnake killed in the fields by a ſervant was brought up to the houſe; looking at it among the others, I involuntarily expreſſed a kind of antipathy at the ſight of it. Young Broke was preſent and obſerved it, on which he told me that in the beginning of the ſummer a neſt of them was found in the old part of the manſion. I did not perceive his drift, but at night going to bed, having put out my candle, I no ſooner ſtretched my legs down than my feet came in contact with ſomething cold coiled up between the ſheets, which bringing the ſnake to my mind I forgot myſelf and, jumping out of bed, called loudly for a light. This was ſoon brought by the ſquire's man, who emulated his maſter's hu-

mour. The ſquire was at his heels, and entering my chamber almoſt together, they found me ſtanding in my ſhirt, which was great fun, and gave birth to a peal of laughter. I now fathomed the jeſt, but kept my temper, and coolly turning down the bed-clothes, took out ſome links of the inteſtines of a hog filled with air, which, as my prudence did not ſuffer me to throw into the maſter's face, my juſtice prevented me from beſtowing on the man. I only lighted my candle, ſaid it was very funny, and calmly requeſting the ſervant to carry his guts with him, bade them good night without changing my countenance. The youth, however, would not loſe his laugh, the chamber echoed with his

ha!

ha! ha! and the exploit ſerved for a great part of the next day's entertainment. My mortification was not great, and even if it had been, I ſhould have found ample amends in the regard of his mother, if not in the ſignificant ſimpering of his ſiſter, who daily increaſed in officious attentions towards me till I ſuſpected that I might, if I choſe, rival the poet.

Dalby continued to hold his influence over Lady Broke in conſequence of one of thoſe unaccountable voluntary reſignations to deception which ſome ladies prefer to a breach with a flatterer; for in the very exordium of my eſſay to diſcover to her ladyſhip the views of her

poet on the perſon of her daughter, ſhe ſtopped my tongue by ſaying that ſhe ſhould conſider that perſon as her enemy who could be ſo barbarous as to undeceive her in any pleaſing illuſion. This made me ſtill more cautious in betraying either poet or butler, and as no opportunity preſented itſelf, I deemed it a work of ſupererogation to contrive one. Time ſlipped away; I ſeldom ſaw Sir Nicholas, I avoided privacy with Mr. Dalby, to whom I entirely relinquiſhed the credit of my ſonnet, and I was aſſiduous in maintaining the favour of Lady Broke.

CHAP. XXII.

Extraordinary communication to Morland.—He hears from Jones.—A Metamorphoſis.—Feſtive Preparations.—A Moon-light Reverie. Unexpected and Serious Adventures.

EVERY day that brought us nearer to the long contemplated feſtival, ſeemed to encreaſe the kindneſs of my patroneſs towards me. If I pleaſed her in reading to her, in hearing her read I charmed her. The little air I had ſubſtituted in Apollo delighted her, and had it not been for the time it would have required to impreſs

new

new melodies on the ear of the amateur-performers ſhe would have had me ſet all the ſongs of the maſk to new muſic. She now generally called me Morland, and my opinions had as much weight with her as her favorite Dalby's, if not more.

One morning in the end of the week previous to that which had the honor of numbering among its days the grand anniverſary, Lady Broke, after ſome talk with me on the ſubject neareſt her heart, looking at me with an unuſual degree of concern, ſaid; "I am ſorry, Morland, to think that I muſt loſe you." An intimation of this kind, ſo ſudden, ſo unexpected,

expected, alarmed me. "Good heavens! madam" cried I, "you ſurpriſe me." "Very true," replied ſhe; "you are to leave me, but do not be unhappy, for it will be to your advantage." Reaſſured by this information, I ſaid that it belonged to her ladyſhip to diſpoſe of me as ſhe pleaſed. "I could have wiſhed," continued ſhe, "to have retained you at Broke-Hall at leaſt a year or two, but it is not to be. You muſt know that being perfectly ſatisfied that your manners and knowledge entitle you to the conſideration of a gentleman, I yeſterday propoſed to Sir Nicholas that you ſhould have a place at our table, and I did not conceive that he would have raiſed the ſmalleſt objection

objection to the propofal, as it came from me: it was therefore with the utmoft aftonifhment I heard him exclaim *Lord forbid!* I had before declared to him your pretenfions, and even obtained a promife from him to think of fome preferment for you. He put me in mind of this, faying that he was willing to perform the promife, provided you were immediately fent from Broke-Hall. What a ftrange idea! I cannot account for; it nor would he; and it is the firft time of his life that he has been fo pofitive with me." "I am forry, madam" faid I, "to have created any difguft in Sir Nicholas, and fhould be ftill more forry to be the occafion of any diminution of the deference he pays your ladyfhip."—

"I am

"I am ſure of it," cried ſhe, "and that the idea is as ſtrange to you as to me. He can have but one motive, and that muſt be very obvious: his very concealment of it tells plainly what it is; you ſee, Morland, it is in vain to be innocent." This extraordinary and indelicate ſuggeſtion brought the blood into my face. I averted my eyes from Lady Broke's and knew not where to reſt them. "Why do you bluſh, Morland?" continued ſhe, "you have done nothing to bluſh for: he that ſuſpects ought to bluſh; but he did not, and his obſtinacy had nearly cauſed a breach. On your account, however, I commanded myſelf, and I have agreed to your leaving me after next week, on his aſſuring me that

that he would enable you to go and take orders at Oxford. So you fee I muft lofe you, not only to allay the jealoufy of a hufband and avoid the fcandal of the world, but to prevent your lofing thofe advantages you fo highly deferve. When you have taken orders and received fome preferment I fhall confider you as my friend, and then let him keep you from Broke-Hall if he can." Her ladyfhip's fpeech and manner together perplexed me very much, but I did not fail to exprefs my fenfe of the obligation fhe conferred upon me, and though I could hardly afcribe the baronet's ftrange conduct to the motive fhe had felected, I was too much interefted in the

effect

effect to care much about the cause.

On leaving Lady Broke I went immediately to my room, where I contemplated my prospects with pleasure. I saw myself not only snatched from the dreaded fall to which the curate of Reading's despair had doomed me, but raised to views far superior to any my good friend Mrs. Waller could have realized for me. Had it not been for the vicar of Holcomb's rage I might have come strait to Broke-Hall, and I should have had no wish ungratified to mar the present joy; but no joy could equal that which had resulted from the friendship of Jones, and the thought of being torn from him soon

ſoon mingling with the thoughts of Oxford, abated my enjoyment and embittered proſperity. I was in this ſtate of divided feelings when Thomas knocked at my door, and coming in told me that Dr. Rundle's boy wanted to ſpeak to me. "Rundle's boy!" exclaimed I, anticipating tidings of the Affington family, "run, Thomas, and bring him to me." While he was gone, I ſometimes flattered myſelf that the boy might be a bearer of a letter from Jones, ſometimes I feared that he brought me afflictive intelligence from Mr. Rundle himſelf, and at laſt I took it into my head that *Amy* had appeared, and that he had ſent to me knowing what intereſt I had taken in the fate of *William*. Theſe conjectures were

ſoon

ſoon reſolved by the entrance of the lad, who ſaid he was deſired by his maſter to ſee me and deliver a letter into my own hands with his compliments. The ſuperſcription of the letter was apparently written by a female pen. I was not ſo eager to open it as I ſhould have been had it been Jones's hand, I therefore made ſome enquiries for Mr. Rundle, and deſired Thomas to ſee both the boy and his horſe taken care of, before I ſatisfied my curioſity. I had, however, no ſooner diſmiſſed them than I broke the ſeal, and never ſhall I forget my feelings on reading at the bottom of the firſt page the name of Jones. This ſhort letter, written by the ſame hand that wrote the addreſs, was as follows:

" My

"My Dear Morland,

"A ſevere fit of ſickneſs has prevented my writing to you ſooner, nor am I now able to uſe the pen myſelf, though pronounced by the doctors to be out of danger. I cannot reſt, however, till I inform you that you have again a friend in my father, that my mother, who with my ſiſter came up to London to nurſe me, has convinced him that you are incapable of baſe compliances or clandeſtine intrigues, and that as ſoon as I am able to travel we ſhall all ſet out for Affington. I long for the time, having much to ſay to you: meanwhile, let me hear from you ſoon after you receive this, and tell me why you did not write to me on

on finding my letters at Collins's cottage. I am afraid you are at Broke-Hall, and I ſhall therefore encloſe this to Mr. Rundle, with a requeſt to have it delivered into your own hands. I am, my dear Morland,

"Your affectionate friend,

"JOHN JONES, Junr."

Let thoſe who have been ſuddenly raiſed from the gulf of deſpair to the ſummit of hope, judge of the rapture produced in my breaſt by this letter. I flew to detain Mr. Rundle's boy to carry my anſwer to the poſt, and immediately returned to pour out my heart to my friend.

friend. I painted to him my affliction on being abandoned by Mr. Jones: I acknowledged the receipt of his letters and the refolution I had formed of foregoing the enjoyment of his friendfhip rather than be the means of creating the flighteft divifion in his family: I complained of the fecret enemy who had injured me with his father; and I dwelt on the rapture his letter excited, and on my gratitude to his mother. I concluded with a hiftory of my life at Broke-Hall, defcribed the inhabitants and proceedings with a *gaieté de cœur* infpired by my happy feelings, and, fketching my profpects from the microfcopic vifion of youthful fancy, I befought him to accelerate his convalefcence by every

means, and I avoided mentioning the name of Sophia. Having diſpatched the boy with my anſwer, I again read Jones's letter, where I found a new ſource of delight in tracing the hand of his ſiſter, which I now remembered to have noticed in her ſongs during my happy week at Affington-Houſe. The recollection renewed ſome ideas which I had magnanimouſly driven from my mind, and which I now again almoſt immediately banifhed, folding up the letter and putting it away. Truth, however, compels me to confeſs, that I firſt kiſſed every line of it.

When I had again and again contemplated my happineſs, anticipated my preferment through Lady Broke,

and my reunion with Jones, I recollected that it was one of Murphy's days, and I was ſurpriſed on reflection that he had never informed me of the departure of Mrs. and Miſs Jones from Affington. I reſolved to enquire the reaſon of it, and going into the muſic room found him teaching Miſs Broke. I was aſtoniſhed at the alteration of his dreſs and figure. He had on a new dark green frock, cut off ridiculouſly beyond the faſhion; a ſmart ſtriped waiſtcoat, from the upper part of which through the facings of an under waiſtcoat ſprouted an amazing frill cloſely plaited; his neck was envelloped in a fine blue ſilk handkerchief inſtead of a neckcloth; he had pantaloons, the legs of which were

were early loſt in a pair of capital huſſar boots relieved by long ſpurs. His hair, which had been pinched and powdered, was diſordered by his ride, and by its natural abhorrence to the diſtortion produced by hot iron: but altogether he was, to uſe a homely ſimile, as ſmart as a carrot. When I recollected the emaciated, cropped, humble creature, trudging a-foot in duſty ſhoes and a ragged coat with a fiddle caſe under his arm, and compared it with the daſhing gentleman before me, I could not help ſmiling, and, Miſs Broke caſting her eye on me, and then on him, and tittering, I ſaw he was extremely nettled. He hardly deigned to look at me, but as his ſcholar did oftener than he liked, he had the aſſurance to tell

me, with a haughty look, that I took off her attention. The leſſon over, and the pupil withdrawn; "why Murphy," cried I, "you have undergone a complete metamorphoſis." Murphy did not underſtand the word. "Mauphiſis! Sir," ſaid he, "I don't know what you mean." "I mean your dreſs," replied I. "Yes," ſaid he, "I am dreſſed in the faſhion; the houſes I go to make it neceſſary for me to be properly dreſſed; I have a great many ſcholars, and as their mammas take particular notice of me, I am bound as a gentleman not to diſgrace their company."—"And ſo you are much noticed, and are getting on well, ey!"—"Yes, I have a great number of ſcholars, thank God, and can afford

afford myſelf good clothes without conſulting any body."—"Bravo, Mr. Murphy! but I had no fear of your ſucceeding by your talents, I am only afraid of"—"Oh, don't be afraid, my good fellow, there's no fear of my doing—I only want a more larger ſphere—merit is not rewarded in the country. Next winter you ſhall ſee what I will do. I know I ſhall get letters from the Joneses." "The Joneses!" ſaid I, frowning at his familiar tone. "They are good people," added he, "and I have made other friends who ſay I ought to be in London, and who can promote my intereſt there."—"Oho! I give you joy of your advancement; but as you have mentioned the Affington family, let

me aſk you why you did not inform me of the ladies having left the country."—" It did not occur." " Pray did you aſk at the cottage for letters for me?"—" It did not occur before they went, and I have not been at Affington ſince."—" But did you not promiſe me to enquire?" " I am ſo engaged with people of conſequence and fortune that it did not occur."— " Excellent!" cried I, " ſee what it is to have friends!"—" A man of talents," replied he, " particularly in the ſcience of harmony, is always ſure to be courted. The great are more dependent upon us than we upon the great —You don't know the world, my good fellow."—" Very likely not; but this is certain that I do not know *you* again, Mr. Murphy. What have you

you here?" ſaid I, taking up a book that lay upon a ſheet of muſic paper which he had untied to put up a ſong with it. "Only my little Ovid." "Ovid!" exclaimed I, opening it, and finding it to be a tranſlation of the Art of Love, bound up with ſeveral looſe poems. "Yes," ſaid he, "it was recommended to me by your friend Jones." Though I was not eaſily provoked, and had determined to conſider this perverted fool more as an object of pity than of anger, I could not reſtrain my indignation at this ſlander of my friend. "'Tis falſe, you puppy," cried I, "he has too much virtue to recommend it to any one, and too much dignity to ſpeak either for or againſt it to his fidler." Murphy looked more aſ-

toniſhed at my cenſure of the book than affronted at the language in which I conveyed it. He had no idea that he had caſt a ſlur upon Jones, but rather meant his unfounded aſſertion as a tranſient teſtimony of his liberality, never conceiving that I ſhould either be offended with it, or remember it beyond the moment. With all the ſelf-conceit that had been rapidly engendered by his uncommon ſucceſs, he was not bold enough to perſiſt in a charge which he had ſome confuſed notion from what I had ſaid was of an infamous nature, and confeſſing that he had not ſpoken in earneſt, ſaid he had bought it at a ſtall during the fair. I thought it beſt, in the preſent ſtate of affairs at Broke-Hall, to appear ſatisfied

tisfied with this. He begged me not to mention his having taken ſuch a liberty with Mr. Jones's name, hoped I was not offended with any thing he had ſaid, and aſſured me that he ſhould be glad to be of ſervice to me when he had made a fortune, which he ſhould ſoon do in London. Lady and Miſs Broke coming in prevented my laughing, and inſtead of putting Murphy's book back upon his paper, I ſlipped it into my pocket, reſolved to conſign it to the flames. Her ladyſhip regaled herſelf with a repetition of ſome of the ſongs in the Maſk, till Murphy's engagements at Exeter compelled him to go. She then put him in mind that the grand rehearſal, with all the ſcenery and the whole band, was to be on Tueſday, previous to the repreſentation

on Thurſday, the great day. As he put up his paper, he reminded me of his book, but I ſhook my head to intimate the impropriety of producing it before the ladies, and he did not dare to urge it.

From this time Broke-Hall was in a continual ſtate of buſtle and active preparation. The ſcenery of the theatre was brought up and arranged; the lamps for the garden were fixed to the trees; marquees and awnings were diſpoſed in various parts of the grounds; new ornaments were added to the great ſaloon; and the whole manſion, the ancient as well as the modern part, was under the changeful hand of taſte. Scourers and cleaners of both ſexes, workmen of every deſcrip-

tion,

tion, the family domeſtics, and Mr. Dalby's graces, going to and fro; the young ſquire and his ſiſter running in and out of every chamber, not excepting mine; arrivals of intimates and their attendants, who were to be accommodated in the houſe; and the ſucceſſion of carts and beaſts of burden returning with their various loads for the feaſt, perpetuated a moving ſcene, which, though heterogeneous and irregular, was not diſpleaſing, upon the ſame principle that the claſhing and diſcordant notes of many inſtruments in tuning for a concert are never offenſive to the ear, however delicate. It was far from being unſuitable to the ſtate of mind I was in; the happy occurrences that had relieved my anxieties left my ſenſes free to admit an impreſſion of
 pleaſure,

pleaſure, which is naturally made by an extenſive combination of enjoyment. Nay, I confeſs that in the ſpecies of intoxication that prevailed, I more than once detected myſelf highly pleaſed with the conſpicuous figure I made in theſe preparations. I was preſented to all Lady Broke's friends, and repeatedly found myſelf the ſource of their pleaſure, and if I was not vain I cannot deny that I was gratified. In ſubmitting, however, to her ladyſhip's taylor ſtuffing me into the gaudy garments of the god of day to try how they fitted, I felt myſelf for a moment Tom Fool, but I was reconciled to the cap and trimmings, not only in conſequence of the general praiſe they obtained, but in gratitude to Apollo for the part he had had in my preferment.
Lady

Lady Broke could not ſufficiently admire them, and as for the queen of the feaſt, ſhe could hardly reſtrain her raptures within the bounds of decency; ſuch are the great effects of a little tinſel.

In the beginning of the week the arrival in Exeter of ſeveral families expected from a diſtance was announced at Broke-Hall, and an interchange of morning viſits took place. Mr. Dalby, who, ſatisfied with my ſecrecy, did not obſerve that I intentionally avoided him, was now a buſy perſonage, and Murphy, turned gentleman and coxcomb, was alſo a prominent character. This young man's folly vexed me not a little, and I determined to give him a lecture upon it as ſoon as the feſtivities

of Broke-Hall were over, as the part I had taken in his advancement entitled me to advife him. He had again applied for his book, and provoked me to tell him he fhould never have it, which enraged him to that degree that he fwore he would.

On Tuefday every thing began to affume an appearance of arrangement, and the number and gaiety of the company then in the houfe, would, without farther addition have formed, in my opinion, a grand celebration; what magnificence then did I not look forward to on Thurfday, when every part of the manfion would be filled with perfons of the higheft rank and fortune, with fafhion, wit, and beauty. The company,

pany, however, ſeemed as much intereſted with the prelude as they poſſibly could be with the feaſt itſelf. All were in high ſpirits but Sir Nicholas, whoſe ſhort attempts at merriment were conſtantly ſucceeded by long and gloomy reveries. In the evening the gardens were lighted for a ſhort time to judge of the effect of the lamps, and the theatre was as completely adjuſted for the rehearſal as it was to be for the repreſentation. The muſicians placed themſelves, the ſpectators took their ſeats, the ſcene-ſhifters were at their poſts, and the *dramatis perſonæ* were all dreſſed in character, the Arcadians were allready with their crooks and their garlands, and nothing was omitted. The poet, who had relinquiſhed his part in the maſk, in con-

consequence of the defection of *the Daphne*, made amends by speaking a prologue composed by himself in a style worthy of his translation, and in which, as a birth-day tribute, he bestowed on the lady a fine face and graceful mein, a cultivated understanding and every virtue of the heart: Venus gave her her beauty, Minerva her sense, and Diana her chastity, which united boons he, by a new figure of speech, concentred in the donation of an all-accomplished mother. He was rewarded with applause not inferior to his expectation, for it is a rule in gratuitous performances to overlook faults, and never to disappoint hope. The piece, meagre, and puerile as it was, was played with spirit, and gave general delight. The music, the show, the

the action, and, above all, the diffusive tendency of pleasure gave a relish to the entertainment perhaps never surpassed at any public theatre.

The remainder of the evening was spent in eating and drinking, in flattery and mirth: of the last young Nick created a great deal, while his father sought a resource in the bottle. The company took their refreshment in groups, standing or sitting as they inclined; Dalby's prologue was handed about with his adopted version of the Italian sonnet, and he lavished his smiles, gracious looks, and familiar expressions on me with greater profusion than ever. I received such attention from every one that I should not have been sorry for the

the poſitive commands laid upon me by Lady Broke not to leave the ſaloon, had it not been for one circumſtance by which I was again and again put to the bluſh. Wherever I turned, with whomever I ſpoke, I was ſure to catch the eyes of Miſs Broke upon me, and when mine met her's ſhe ſmiled and gazed ſo oddly that I was diſconcerted. Several times I was in ſuch a poſition that I could not move without preſſing againſt ſome perſon, in which ſituation ſhe would needleſsly fix herſelf as cloſe to me as if we were in a crowd, and tread on my feet: I more than once begged her pardon, and at laſt her conduct became ſo irkſome that I reſolved to quit the room, and accordingly retired unobſerved.

The

The action both of mind and body in which I was engaged the whole evening, the praiſes I had received, the converſations I had been honoured with, the delicacies I had eat, and the wine I had drank, all concurred to indiſpoſe me to ſleep, and, inſtead of retiring to my room, I walked into the garden, ſtrolling to an alcove that fronted the weſt. The air was mild and unagitated, the ſky ſerene, the moon, nearly full, was high in the firmament, the repoſe of nature ſeemed doubly tranquil to my ſenſes, ſo long bent on the moving ſcenes of gaiety. I ſat down to enjoy the ſilence, freſhneſs, and beauty of the night. I inſenſibly fell into a reverie, in which my imagination, after paſſing

over

over the immediate occurrences of the evening, recalled the paſſed events of my life, reviewed the melancholy ſtory of the injured Sophia Nevill, dwelled on my friendſhip with Jones, and reperuſed with infinite delight the letter that had reſtored him to me; it then ſprang forward into futurity, it put me into orders and gave me a benefice, it united me with Jones, it houſed me at Aſſington—ſhall I own it? ſhall I confeſs the intoxication? it raiſed my thoughts to the lovely Louiſa—in the glowing ſtate of my feelings I dared to think it poſſible ſhe might receive the incenſe of my heart. Entranced in the delightful viſion, I yielded myſelf to the fairy faculty till the chill of midnight hour awa-

kened

kened my ſenſes, and ſent me into the houſe.

It was near one o'clock, the family and the gueſts had been gone to bed above an hour, Thomas, who with one or two of the ſtrangers' ſervants was lingering in the kitchen, brought me a light, and I proceeded to my chamber. I had juſt begun to undreſs myſelf, when I thought I heard ſomebody run gently along the paſſage to my door, on which I went up to it with the candle in my hand to ſee who was there, but before I could take hold of the lock it was opened, and young Broke entered. I was rather ſu prifed, but immediately imagined he was upon ſome of his

his fun. "What a d—d fool you muſt be," cried he, with an arch grin, "to keep the candle alight." Saying which he blew it out. "Now you have a chance," continued he, "but you had none before, and I ſhall come in for ſome of the fun. You are betrayed by Murphy; he is at this moment bringing Sir Nicholas by the light of the moon through the paſſage; hark!"—"I am not eaſily terrified Mr. Broke," ſaid I, "and I beg you will leave my room." "Huſh!" cried he. I now heard ſteps very plainly. The moon being on the other ſide of the houſe and my windows being partly ſhut, the chamber was ſufficiently darkened to prevent the diſtinguiſhing of perſons,

ſons, but not to conceal objects entirely. Young Broke having groped his way to my bedſide, and drawn the curtain cloſe, ſaid, in a low voice, "I ſay, an't you afraid?" at that moment the door burſt open. "He has put out his candle," cried a man, whom by his voice I knew to be Sir Nicholas—"ſhut the door—call for lights." As he roared this out a piſtol went off; the flaſh diſcovered it to be in the hand of the wretched man, it was directed towards the bed—his ſon fell, uttering a dreadful groan .A terrible ſilence enſued. Convinced that I was the object of his fury, and almoſt ſtupified with horror, I feared to ſpeak or move, leſt a ſecond piſtol ſhould be as fatal to me as the firſt had been to the

the foolish youth, who had in a manner sought his own death. I was astonished that the murderer, instead of avoiding detection, stood guarding the door, while his accomplice was gone for lights. Trusting that the bearer of the lights would prevent any farther mischief, I remained as still as possible, praying to the Almighty to divert the attention of the villain from me. The dead silence that reigned in the room was interrupted only twice, and then by the same involuntary and unaccountable exclamation from the mouth of the assassin: "I am safe again, I am safe." The report of the pistol alarmed several of the guests, who, directed by the sound, were hastening in their bedgowns to enquire what had

had happened: they joined the ſervants, and as the party approached with the light, the piſtols became viſible to me in the hands of the murderer. I was ſtanding at a little diſtance from him, my waiſtcoat open, my knees unbuttoned. I trembled leſt his eyes ſhould turn upon me. Impelled by terror, as the door opened to admit the crowd that had collected, I ruſhed upon Sir Nicholas, ſeized his hands, and directed the piſtols upwards. Far from oppoſing me, the affrighted wretch gazed as if at a ſpectre, let go the weapons, and ſunk upon the floor. Appalled by the terrible circumſtances that overwhelmed my faculties, and ſcarcely ſenſible that I held the piſtols in my hands, I looked

 wild,

wild, and was ſpeechleſs. The body of Young Broke, bathed in his blood was examined, and found lifeleſs. To the general queſtion; "who has done this?" I had not ſufficient recollection to reply, till I heard Murphy, who had returned with the candles, exclaim; "how could you commit ſo deſperate an action?" "*He!*" cried Thomas, who was among the ſpectators, "Mr. Morland kill the young ſquire?"—"Who elſe could do it?" cried Murphy. "What reaſon have you for ſaying ſo?" ſaid a gentleman, "and what motive had he to murder Mr. Broke?" "To prevent his finding his ſiſter, to be ſure," replied Murphy. "Infamous villain!" cried I, recovering myſelf from ſtupor to plunge into madneſs—

madneſs—"infamous villain!" and I preſented the piſtol in my hand at him; but I inſtantly withdrew my arm. The action, however, alarmed the byſtanders, and ſome of them declaring I was mad, ſeized me by the arms. The efforts made by ſome of the people to recover Sir Nicholas were gradually ſucceſsful, and he recovered ſenſe enough to know what was paſſing, without ſufficient ſtrength to interfere. Some more of the gueſts were coming in every moment, and Murphy having put his head through the curtains, and looked into my bed, went round from one to another, muttering to the perſons immediately addreſſed. I was convinced he was endeavouring to criminate me, and I was about to

addreſs the company when one of them ſaid: "certainly, it will decide the fact at once," and going up to the bed undrew the curtains. Gracious heaven! how was I confounded on perceiving ſome perſon in it ſhrinking beneath the covering! "Infamous! Horrible! Seducer! Murderer!" were the petrifying words that now reached my ear, and harrowed up my ſoul. "Gentlemen!" cried I, "you cannot, you cannot believe it." The byſtanders raiſed their hands and eyes to heaven, and remained a few moments in ſilent conſternation. None but Thomas ſeemed diſpoſed to ſhow me the leaſt favour, and he, poor fellow! I remember it well, and ever ſhall—boldly ſaid: "let things look as

as they may, for my part I am ſure Mr. Morland don't deſerve any ſuch ill ſuſpicion, that he don't." As he ſaid this, Sir Nicholas groaned, and keeping his head down, deſired to be helped away. Murphy went with him, and preſently a man coming in ſaid, that his maſter had given orders that I ſhould be ſecured, and that the perſon in the bed ſhould be aſcertained. A couple of ſtout fellows laid hold of my arms, and ſeveral perſons were going up to the bed, when a figure, in a wrapping gown, ſuddenly darted from the farther ſide of the bed, and endeavoured to eſcape to the door. Caught by the arm, ſhe turned to extricate herſelf, and the part of the gown that veiled her face falling upon her neck, expoſed,

alas, too clearly! the guilty countenance of the baronet's daughter. She was then ſuffered to make her retreat amidſt the repeated exclamations of infamous! horrible!—As for me, I was loſt in fearful amazement, and, finding every attempt to juſtify myſelf unavailable, yielded to my fate. The body of Young Broke was removed, the company gradually left the room, and I remained with my guards. In about half an hour two men came in, and informing me that I was committed, ſaid that I muſt go with them immediately. Reviled, forſaken, conſidered as a ſeducer and a murderer, my fortitude gave way, my ſoul for a moment ſunk beneath its load, and not caring what became of me, I followed

lowed my jailors without uttering a single word, and without once thinking of the nature of the place whither I was about to be conveyed. I remember not in what vehicle I was transported from Broke-Hall, I interchanged not a syllable with the men who had me in custody. I was awakened from my trance by the sounds of bolts and the clanking of irons. I started at the new horrors that presented themselves, I involuntarily drew back, I grasped the jailor's hand, pressed it warmly, and begged him to tell me what I had done. He said it was too late to talk to me, and bade me come along. I made a slight resistance, and was forcibly pushed forward. A bundle of

ſtraw was thrown into a corner for me, I ſunk down upon it. The maſſy door was locked upon me. I was left in total darkneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Morland in Priſon.—Reflects on himſelf.—The Vicar's Conduct.—A Lawyer.—News from London and from Broke-Hall.—Important Occurrences in the Priſon.

THE horror of my ſituation overpowered my faculties, and it was ſome time before I could compoſe my mind ſufficiently to reflect with any conſiſtency. Happily the ſeaſon of the year was favorable; my common apparel and my ſtraw were even more than neceſſary for warmth and relief from the hard pavement; when, therefore, my recollection began

gan to aſſume a regular train, it was not interrupted by additional bodily ſufferings, and as I was conſcious that I was innocent of the crime for which I was impriſoned, with recollection I recovered a great degree of fortitude. Revolving in my mind the circumſtances which had led to my impriſonment, I found no great difficulty in accounting for moſt of them. Although it had never entered my imagination that any young woman could be ſo loſt to modeſty as to ſteal at midnight from her own chamber to that of a man, I was convinced from the whole of Miſs Broke's conduct that ſhe had determined to relinquiſh every pretenſion to that virtue: however ſurprized I was therefore at her being detected

in

in my room, it was on reflection, no wonderful event. Her behaviour the whole day before, particularly in the evening, being but too obvious to every eye, it was nothing ſtrange that a corrupt ſpirit like Murphy's ſhould be ſo excited by ſuſpicion as to put him upon the watch. There was no doubt in my mind that he had traced her into the chamber, that he had informed both Sir Nicholas and his ſon of her being there, and that while he was on this noble buſi-neſs, I had come in from the garden and gone to my room. It was clear that young Broke had no idea of his father bringing arms, that he was unprincipled enough to laugh at his ſiſter's degeneracy, and had hurried on to gratify his propenſity to wha

he called fun. His father's miſtake on ſeeing him at the bed-ſide was natural, and the impetuoſity of paſſion occaſioned the parricide. All this was intelligible, but Sir Nicholas's ſelf-congratulation on *being ſafe again*, his terror, his immediate relinquiſhing of the piſtols, his inſtant ſwooning before he could know what he had done, were unaccountable circumſtances; and when to theſe I added his behaviour on firſt ſeeing me, his perſevering gaze at me ever after, and his reſolution rather to provide for me at once than ſuffer me near him, I was loſt in conjecture; for as to the fooliſh motive Lady Broke's vanity had induced her to ſuggeſt, it was corroborated by no one ſymptom. If ever jealouſy had been

been a paffion of his heart it had apparently long ceafed to act: and befides their having both attained the age which it feldom molefts, fhe had long been the uncontrolled miftrefs of her conduct; nor had all her marked partiality to Mr. Dalby awakened one uneafy thought in her hufband's breaft. On thefe inexplicable points therefore I pondered for hours in vain, till exhaufted nature clofed the avenues of thought by fleep.

In a few hours I woke to new horrors, I found myfelf furrounded by a number of wretched culprits, criminal in various degrees, who were to be tried at the next general gaol-delivery. Their hideous looks, their filthy garb, their hardened manners, all

all conſpired to ſhock me. Some of them accoſted me, and aſked for money as a cuſtom; others inquired into the nature of my offence. It was with ſome difficulty I obtained a ceſſation of attention. So many accounts have been given of priſons of every kind, and of the ſcenes exhibited in them, that a deſcription of thoſe which it was my lot to witneſs would be ſuperfluous. I ſhall only obſerve that few of the priſoners ſeemed very ſenſible of the horrors with which they appeared to be ſurrounded. They diſcovered little remorſe for the paſt, or apprehenſion for the future: they eat and drank, were eaſily amuſed, and anticipated acquittals. As for me, driven to this woful extremity, the firſt thought that

that occurred to me was to make my ſituation known to the vicar of Holcomb. I had fortunately ſeveral guineas in my pocket, which not only procured me ſuſtenance but enabled me to employ a meſſenger. Having obtained pen, ink and paper, I wrote a letter to Mr. Whitaker. It was but a ſhort one, for I was eager to diſpatch it, and thought nothing neceſſary but a ſtatement of the crime I was charged with, a denial of it, and my confinement. I urged him to eſpouſe my cauſe, and entreated him to come and hear what I had to ſay.

When I had given my letter to one of the turnkeys, who promiſed to ſend it without delay, being previouſly

viously paid for the conveyance, I again meditated on the occurrences that had involved me in my present misery, and I examined my heart to see how far I had deserved it. The charge itself for which I suffered was out of the question; men in punishing proceed on visible and ostensible crimes, but if the heart be dyed with offences, it is of little importance that it happens to be clear of that of which error or villainy accuses it. In human codes and statutes the precise penalty must be written against each offence, but this principle extends not to the law paramount of heaven: the blasphemer, the traitor, the slanderer, may be given over to the death of the murderer, and the conscience of the wicked will justify the punishment,

ment, though the particular accuſation for which he ſuffers be unfounded. I examined my heart—alas! it reproached me bitterly. I had ſacrificed truth and honor at the ſhrine of pride, I had abandoned ſincerity for the proſpect of preferment, I ſought obligations from a perſon I deſpiſed, from one to whom my gratitude could never be pure, as no ſervice could prevent its being mingled with contempt and abhorrence. I reproached, I reviled myſelf for this defalcation of virtue, this vicious ſpirit; and I conſidered the blaſting of my hopes as the juſt retribution of my offence. I did not, however, think that offence deſerving of ſo heavy a puniſhment as the ſuſpicion, far leſs the conviction, of murder; but

but, after repenting the folly and depravity of my conduct at Broke-Hall, I fully resigned myself into the hands of the being who knew best how far to try me, and whose chastisements have their source in love.

From myself my reflections turned upon Lady Broke, whose infamous conduct towards Sophia Nevill now met its reward. She, who had been so ready to sully the fame of that lovely, injured, virtuous girl, was now to face the same circles of acquaintance from whom the infamy of her daughter could not be concealed. The re-action was complete, and her punishment the more just for her unpardonable negligence of those principles that should be early,

and

and in preference to every other part of education, inſtilled into the mind of children.

I ſupported my ſpirits for ſome time by a train of moral reflections, which were interrupted by the turn-key, who came to tell me that my meſſenger was returned from Holcomb. "Has he brought me a letter?" ſaid I. "No."—"Is Mr. Whitaker coming then?"—"No."—"What can you mean?" cried I; "has he ſent me no meſſage?"—"He told the man who carried your letter, to ſay that he wondered at your aſſurance in ſending to him."—"Is it poſſible?" exclaimed I: "great God! what is to become of me?"—"That muſt depend upon the defence you can ſet

ſet up," ſaid the jailor, "I ſuppoſe you mean to employ a lawyer. You have time enough, the 'ſizes don't come on theſe three weeks yet." "Three weeks!" cried I, "am I to remain three weeks in this condition?"—"Why yes," replied the turnkey, "ſeeing that your affair an't a bailable matter." I ſaid it would be impoſſible for me to exiſt without my things and better accommodation. "As for your things," ſaid he, "I don't ſuppoſe you will get them, but you had better conſult a lawyer; and as for accommodation, if you have money you may purchaſe conveniencies." I thanked the man for his advice and information, and ſaid I would take a little time to conſider what to do. I thought of Jones, but,

but, alas! he was at a diſtance, and hardly out of a bed of ſickneſs, into which I feared he might again be thrown if I communicated to him too ſoon the horrid ſituation I was in. Mr. Rundle alſo occurred to my recollection, but what hope could I have of his interfering in my cauſe, when Mr. Whitaker had forſaken me! After ſome conſideration I reſolved to adviſe with a lawyer, and having no friend to recommend one to me, I requeſted that favor of Mr. Ward, the keeper of the priſon, who immediately ſent for one of his acquaintance, whoſe name was Brainbridge. The firſt queſtion this attorney aſked me was relative to the ſtate of my finances, and being informed that I had altogether in my

purſe and in my trunk between twenty and thirty guineas, he ſaid it would be enough, though barely, to carry me on to the aſſizes and through my trial: but the firſt thing to be done was to get poſſeſſion of my trunk, which might be attended with ſome difficulty, but he would undertake it. I then told him the circumſtances relative to the death of young Broke. He ſaid I told my ſtory very well, and that Counſellor Langworthy, whom he ſhould fee if he got my trunk, would make it do with a jury; but the beſt way would be to get a plump oath if we could. "It is time enough, however," ſaid he, "to talk of that by and by, when we have ſecured your means. I'll go about it directly, and ſee you in

in the afternoon." Saying which he left me to ponder on my wretched ſtate, for I thought it uſeleſs to apply to the keeper for better accomodation till I could convince him that I was able to purchaſe it.

Brainbridge returned according to his word, and brought my trunk with him. He told me that Sir Nicholas Broke was confined to his bed, but that on talking with the butler he had found leſs oppoſition than he had expected. "But," ſaid he, "they tell a very different ſtory at the Hall from yours, as I ſuſpected. There's half a dozen evidences to the piſtols being in your hands when the lights were brought, and I underſtand there's a young man

man ready to ſwear poſitively that you ſhot the baronet's ſon, at the time he was bid to go for candles. However, never fear, I have got many others off in as bad caſes." He then aſked me to make an advance on account, as was cuſtomary. I ſaid I ſhould have no objection, on knowing how he meant to proceed, and begged him to give me ſome notion of what was to be done. He here entered into an account of the legal proceſs from the commitment of an offender to the execution of his ſentence. "Now," added he, "you know as much as I do myſelf, and the thing we have to do is to get you off. We can't go to prove an *alibi* as you were ſeen on the ſpot by ſo many people, but there was

one man among the ſervants that talked as if he meant me to underſtand he was to be had; nay, he went ſo far as to ſay he was ſure you were an innocent man: now, we muſt give him a weighty argument, you underſtand me, why he ſhould have got into the room before the reſt, and ſeen you, as you ſay, take the piſtols from Sir Nicholas: then if that young fellow, the muſician's evidence can be bought off, there will be nothing to hinder your going before the jury with a bold face, notwithſtanding the baronet's power in the county." Having ſuffered the attorney to reveal all the infamous practices he purpoſed to employ in my favour, I calmly told him I would ſooner die than conſent to be

ſaved by ſuch means, and ſaying that I would leave my cauſe to the penetration of the judge under providence, I requeſted to know what I was indebted to him for the trouble he had taken. Brainbridge was inclined to be abuſive, obſerving that he would not have done any thing if he had not thought he was to do all the buſineſs; but I pacified him by aſſuring him that I ſhould employ no other attorney: on which he ſaid, that as for his charges he ſhould leave it to myſelf to take into conſideration the ſervice he had been of in procuring my trunk, beſides the journey and his trouble. In addition to theſe conſiderations I added myſelf a very important one; he was the keeper's friend. I gave him three

three guineas, and he went away ſatisfied, after adviſing me to think better of it than to truſt either to human ſagacity or ſupernatural interference. I thought otherwiſe, nor, oppreſſed as I was with the ſhocking events and circumſtances which ſeemed to criminate me, did I ever apprehend that I ſhould be convicted for them. I was ſhocked at the idea of appearing as a criminal at the bar, but I felt confident that if I were brought before a court, the truth would be made manifeſt.

I now made my reſolution known to the keeper, and convincing him that I could ſupport myſelf for ſome weeks, he diſmiſſed a portion of rigour from his viſage, took me in-

to a little room beyond his own, and liftened to my account of the event at Broke-Hall. Whether convinced by my artlefs relation of the fact, or foftened by the golden recommendations of my purfe, I know not, he faid that my cafe was a very hard one, but that, as far as he could go, I fhould not want for comfort. He had a couch placed for me in the little room, which was as ftrongly barricadoed as any other part of the jail, and allowed me to eat with him and his wife, for which, though I paid extravagantly, I was very grateful. Worn out with fatigue and depreffion, I went early to my couch, where I flept foundly till the keeper came to call me to breakfaft next morning. I was treated with civility,

lity, and even reſpect, by the gaoler and his wife: they procured me whatever I wanted, and I might either ſit in the room I ſlept in, or in their parlour. The former was my choice, but I ſometimes found a relaxation for my mind in the latter.

I paſſed the whole of the ſecond day in deliberating whether to write to Jones or not, and was at length determined by reflecting that my ſituation and the charge againſt me would probably be immediately made known to Mr. Jones with the accumulated aggravations of report. In my letter I gave an account of all that had happened, deſcribed the previous behaviour of Sir Nicholas in reſpect to myſelf, and ſtated my re-

ſolution to reſt my cauſe on the operations of truth and innocence. I conjured Jones not to ſuffer a wrong bias to be impreſſed upon his father's heart, whatever were the event of my trial, and not to run any riſk of a relapſe by a precipitate journey into Devonſhire. Two days after I had diſpatched this letter I ſat in the inner room, reading Voltaire's account of the execution of Calas for the murder of his ſon, and had come to the paſſage where, after being broken on the wheel and on the point of being thrown into the fire, he appeals ſo affectingly to the monk who exhorted him to confeſs the crime; "Father, can you bring yourſelf to believe that I am guilty?" when I was interrupted by the

the entrance of Thomas, Lady Broke's ſervant. The poor fellow having been ſent to town on ſome errands had found a letter for me at the poſt-office, which induced him to venture to come and ſee me, which he had felt a great inclination to do ever ſince the day of my commitment. Much as I was pleaſed with the attention of this good creature, and deſirous of knowing the tranſactions at Broke-Hall, my letter, on the ſight of Jones's hand, engroſſed my thoughts, and thanking Thomas mechanically as I opened it, I read as follows:

" I am again able to hold the pen, my dear Morland, and the firſt uſe I make of it is to acknowledge both the pleaſure and the pain

your letter from Broke-Hall has given me. I am delighted with your descriptions and with the spirits you write in, but that your prospects should proceed from a creature I must always despise, such a woman as Lady Broke, is not to my mind: I can hardly bear the thoughts of it. But comfort yourself; my father, who is warmly interested in your welfare, says he is glad to hear that you are going to Oxford under the Broke patronage, as the baronet has it so much in his power to serve you; and he thinks it would be very imprudent to withdraw from the tide of good fortune which seems to favour you. Well! be it so, though I cannot help thinking you would have been happier in the less considerable kind offices my father might have rendered you,

you, and which he has been planning with me for ſome days paſt in the moſt affectionate manner. Morland, he is the beſt of men; I have much to ſay to you of him, but as I am forbidden to indulge myſelf in writing, I will not enter upon the ſubject till we meet, which I hope will be very ſoon, as I am ſtronger, and ſhall be able to travel in the end of the week, though leiſurely. This is the day of the grand farce at Broke-Hall: I wiſh it was over; I cannot endure the idea of your taking a part in it. We had cards, and muſt have been preſent, had it not been for this illneſs of mine, to which I therefore feel great obligation. *Some* of the Nevills will be in the crowd: you will diſtinguiſh Clara; ſhe is very handſome—but,

Morland, ſhe is not Sophia. You need not anſwer this letter, as we ſhall leave town before yours could reach me here. My mother and ſiſter deſire to be very kindly remembered to you. I am, very truly,

"My dear Morland,

"your affectionate friend,

"JOHN JONES, Junr."

The pleaſure this letter gave me was counterbalanced by the dread of the effect a malignant report of my misfortune might have on the mind of Mr. Jones, and I condemned myſelf for having delayed ſo long to ſend my own account, which I found would not arrive in London before his departure. I was however confident that Jones would give no credit to it.

it, and I buoyed up my ſpirits by uniting the thoughts of his friendſhip with the conſciouſneſs of my innocence.

The confuſion at Broke-Hall that followed the death of Young Broke, and the detection of his ſiſter, exceeds deſcription. Sir Nicholas was carried to his bed where he lay the whole of the next day; Lady Broke, in the rage excited by her daughter's diſgrace and her own diſappointment, had broken a blood veſſel; a ſtop was put to the feſtival; the company in the houſe departed without ſeeing their hoſt or hoſteſs, and in their room came phyſicians, ſurgeons, and undertakers. An inqueſt was held, and on the evidence

of Murphy a verdict of murder returned againſt me. Not ſatisfied with this, the miſcreant collecting groups of the attendants and ſervants, painted me in the vileſt colours, declared I had been turned out of Affington-Houſe, and ſaid, among other things, that I had purloined a book of his and would not return it: When Thomas mentioned this I aſked him if he had heard it himſelf; on being aſſured that he had, I immediately ſaw the advantage it would be to me on a trial, and I told Thomas that he muſt be ready to give his evidence. "That I will, ſir," ſaid he, "and do any thing in my power to ſerve you, in ſpite of Sir Nicholas or any body elſe; for I am very ſure you had no piſtols in your room till

they were carried there." "How are you ſure?" ſaid I. "Becauſe," replied he, "I know Sir Nicholas's piſtols very well, which I ſaw in your hands." "Were they," ſaid I, "produced before the coroner?" "I don't know, ſir," anſwered Thomas, "for I was not let to go into the room." I bade him enquire, telling him that it was of the utmoſt importance to me to have it aſcertained. He aſſured me he would, and repeating his conviction of my innocence, left me glowing with affection and eſteem.

When he was gone I compared his ſpirit with Murphy's: for the one I had done little or nothing, for the other every thing; the one diſ-

regarded intereſt in favor of juſtice, the other broke through every tie of gratitude to ſupport injuſtice; the one was noble in a livery, the other, in the aſſumed garb of a buck, was mean and vile. The livery, which I had ſo much dreaded, clothed one ſuperior not only to Murphy but to the wealthy maſter in whoſe ſervice it was worn. Thine, O virtue! thine is the real diſtinction! In whatever ſtate, beneath whatever garb thou art found, true nobility dwells. I endeavoured to find ſome adequate cauſe for the egregious depravity of Murphy's ſoul. From what ſource could ſuch a return of evil for good ſpring? Could a ſlight correction of his vanity, could friendly advice, could the depriving him of an improper book

book give birth to ſo diabolical a ſpirit? No, the diabolical ſpirit was already in him, he was

> ——a born devil, on whoſe nature
> Nurture could never ſtick; on whom the pains,
> Humanely taken, were all loſt, quite loſt;
> And as, with age, his body uglier grew,
> So his mind cankered.
>
> SHAK. TEMPEST.

In thinking of this creature I lamented the depravity of his nature, while I felt him beneath reſentment. I was ſenſible, however, that he would heſitate at nothing to accompliſh my deſtruction, and I conſidered how it was poſſible to turn his own malignity upon himſelf. He had already betrayed his principles in

in ſpeaking of his book, which I had fortunately put into my trunk. I truſted the ſame ignorant malice would lead him into toils of his own ſpreading, and I hoped much from the production of the piſtols.

Several days paſſed without any farther occurrence of moment to my hiſtory: left to myſelf I endeavoured to ſupport my mind by reflection and books. As I often ſat in the keeper's room I heard what was going on in the priſon, and ſaw perſons who came to viſit the priſoners. One morning there came in two ladies plainly dreſſed: the firſt that entered appeared to be between forty and fifty, above the middle ſize, and of a mild and pleaſing aſpect; the other young,

young, beautiful, and of the ſame height, whom I was certain I had ſeen before, but did not immediately recollect where. The elder of the two aſked for the young woman of the name of Norman, who had been committed to priſon the night before. "Madam," ſaid Mrs. Ward, the keeper's wife, "the poor girl is ſound aſleep, and I am almoſt afraid to wake her; ſhe certainly is out of her ſenſes at times." The lady looked at her watch. "Let us wait, my dear mother," ſaid the younger one, "the buſineſs we have may be done at any time, but the ſituation of this poor creature requires immediate attention." What heavenly intereſt did this ſpeech caſt on the lovely lips that uttered it! It was the perfume

to the rosebud: the benign expression of the eye that accompanied it, gave soul to beauty.—"Pray, ladies, sit down," said Mrs. Ward, "and as I know your goodness to the unfortunate, give me leave to tell you that I am sure it could never be better bestowed than in befriending this young gentleman, who has no friends to support him." The eyes of the mother and daughter were instantly turned upon me: I blushed at Mrs. Ward's unexpected appeal in my favor. It was previously my intention to have withdrawn, and I now involuntarily rose. "Don't be so shy, Mr. Morland," added the good woman; on whose mention of my name the young lady immediately exclaimed in a low tone, "Morland!"

"Morland!" ſurveying me with a look that ſeemed to ſcrutinize both my mind and perſon. "What, Morland!" ſaid her mother. "I have no family madam," ſaid I, "by which to diſtinguiſh myſelf; I am an unfortunate outcaſt whom it pleaſes Providence to put to ſome ſevere trials." "You ſurely cannot," replied ſhe, "be the perſon of whom there has been ſo much talk lately?" "I know not," ſaid I, "how much I may have been talked of; but it is too probable, madam, that you have heard me ſpoken of as a murderer." They both ſhuddered at the word. "I could lay my life it is falſe," cried Mrs. Ward, "from what I have ſeen of the young gentleman: I wiſh, ladies, you would make him

tell

tell you his ſtory, and perſuade him to have a lawyer."—"That I think," ſaid the elder lady, "prudence would dictate."—"I do not," replied I, "feel myſelf ſo attached to life as to wiſh to preſerve it by taking advantage of legal forms. An acquittal that does not eſtabliſh innocence is not in my opinion deſirable."—"But innocence," ſaid the younger lady, her eyes ſtill fixed upon me, "may require aſſiſtance againſt a powerful adverſary, and for the purpoſe of being placed in a proper point of view."—"No doubt, madam," I replied, "and though I am not acquainted with the practice of the law, I believe you will find it to be the part of an Engliſh judge to act as counſel for every man arraigned before

fore him of a crime. This aſſiſtance I am confident I ſhall have, and I am ſatisfied with it."—" The crime with which you are charged is of a dreadful nature," ſaid the elder lady, " but you ſpeak the language of innocence, and certainly your looks are not thoſe of a murderer; yet we know into what horrors the paſſions of men ſometimes betray them. Give me good grounds to believe you innocent, and you ſhall neither want money nor countenance, to ſupport your cauſe." I aſſured this benevolent woman, that however I might want countenance I was by no means in want of money. This led her to make ſome farther enquiry reſpecting my ſituation in life, and I felt inexpreſſible conſolation in giving an account

count of myſelf, and in relating the occurrences that had terminated ſo gloomily.

The intereſt my ſtory excited was very evident in the countenances of my hearers, the two ladies; for Mrs. Ward had withdrawn before I began my narrative. In ſome parts I obſerved their eyes turned from me to meet thoſe of each other, and then refixed on me. In the looks of the younger I thought I diſcerned a peculiar intelligence and an encreaſe of intereſt. When I finiſhed my ſtory, they both declared their belief of it, not only from the ſimplicity with which it was marked, but from the opinion they entertained of Sir Nicholas Broke and the whole family.

Having

Having lightly mentioned my friendſhip with Jones, and declared that he, his father, and the curate of Reading, were the only men in the world I knew, who were diſpoſed to ſerve me; "You cannot, ſir," ſaid the younger lady, "have a better friend than Mr. Jones; for, though his fortune is not to be mentioned in compariſon with Sir Nicholas Broke's, his virtues and his name rank him among the foremoſt of the inhabitants of this county."—"I know," replied I, "the eſtimation in which he is held, and perhaps, madam, he will be at Affington before I am called to trial. I have a letter in my pocket from his ſon, who is ſufficiently recovered to travel." "Recovered!" cried the daughter. "Has

"Has young Mr. Jones been ill?" ſaid her mother. "You ſhall ſee his letter," replied I, "it is written without the knowledge of my ſituation, and his ſtyle will ſtill farther ſtrengthen your belief of my innocence." They both read the letter; when the mother ſaid that ſhe was not acquainted with Mr. Jones, but was happy to peruſe ſuch a teſtimony in favour of my principles: and ſhe aſſured me that ſhe would immediately relate my account to a friend of hers who was acquainted with the Affington family, and who would join with Mr. Jones in ſtepping forward to countenance me on the day of my trial. I expreſſed my gratitude in the warmeſt terms, and requeſted with great earneſtneſs that ſhe

ſhe would allow me to know the name of one ſo good to me. "If you had not aſked," ſaid ſhe, "I ſhould have left you to learn it of Mrs. Ward, who knows me: my name is Alton." The name inſtantly brought to my recollection the features and perſon of the beautiful cottager of whom I had had a tranſient glimpſe in her garden on the bank of the Ex. I mentioned the circumſtance to her, which ſhe remembered; and I told Mrs. Alton of the liberty Jones and I had taken in ſtealing a look at the ſweet ſpot on which the Hut ſtood.

Mrs. Alton had not time to make any anſwer before the door opened, and Mrs. Ward entered leading in

 the

the young woman whom Mrs. and Miſs Alton had come in queſt of. There was a great deal of ſimplicity in her appearance; and her face, marked with grief, was pretty. She burſt into tears on ſeeing Mrs. Alton, who encouraged her, but it was ſome time before ſhecould ſpeak: at length ſhe ſaid; "dear ma'am! I don't know what ails me lately, but I quite forget myſelf at times; and I ſee ſuch odd things: pray don't ſpeak about it."—"Compoſe yourſelf, my good girl," ſaid Mrs. Alton; "your letter was brought to us this morning, and we come to ſee if we can be of any ſervice to you. How came you into this part of the country? and why did you leave Overton?"—"Oh! dear ma'am, it's a long ſtory to tell,"
replied

replied ſhe, "and I am afraid my wits won't laſt me through: my name is Amy Norman, ma'am; I live at Overton—Oh! I beg your pardon, ma'am, for I need not tell you my name—you remember Amy, poor Amy Norman. Indeed, ma'am, I was not born at the time when they did it, and why they have ſent me here I can't tell." At firſt the name of *Amy* paſſed my ear unnoticed, but the repetition of it brought to my mind the ſtranger that died at the inn, and my curioſity was awakened; for this girl might be the Amy he had ſpoken of. Her language, however, was ſo incoherent that little could be collected from it. She did not even ſeem to know for what ſhe had been committed, and Mrs. Ward explained the cauſe. On alighting

from the ſtage-coach, ſhe declared to the landlady, before one of the waiters, that ſhe was come to Exeter to diſcover a great murder that had been committed; and, continuing to talk myſteriouſly, it was thought neceſſary to apprehend her. Mr. Jones of Pinhoe, the magiſtrate celebrated in the early part of theſe memoirs, happening to be at the inn at the time, ſhe was inſtantly taken before him, and the depoſitions of the landlady and the waiter, with the unintelligible anſwers of the girl to the queſtions put to her, were quite grounds enough for that worthy juſtice to commit her. When brought to the jail, Mrs. Ward found her wild in her thoughts; and, conceiving that ſhe was entirely deranged, reſolved to have her guarded till morning, and then to repreſent her caſe to the

the mayor. However, upon taking ſome refreſhment and reſting, ſhe became tranquil and tolerably rational, and when queſtioned as to her being known in this part of the country, after ſaying ſhe was a perfect ſtranger, recollected that a lady of the name of Alton had left Overton to come and live near Exeter; on which Mrs. Ward, to whom the character of Mrs. Alton was well known, had written the letter which had brought the ladies to the priſon. "Amy!" ſaid Mrs. Alton, "be collected, and if you have any thing to communicate, ſpeak freely."—"Indeed, ma'am," ſaid Amy, "I know nothing of it; it was done before I was born, and it is very hard I ſhould be put to priſon, and kept from ſearching for

my poor William. Dear ma'am, if you will only prevail upon my lord the judge to wait till I find William, we will tell all: we come on purpose, indeed we do." I was now convinced that this young woman was the Amy Mr. Rundle had mentioned. Miſs Alton turning to her mother, obſerved in a low voice, that there was clearly ſomething upon the girl's mind, and that their beſt way would be to get her releaſed, and take her home; where, by keeping her compoſed and taking care of her, ſhe might be ſufficiently reſtored to impart the circumſtance, whatever it was, coherently. The lovely mouth from which this heavenly ſuggeſtion proceeded, being turned towards me as well as towards her

her mother, I expreſſed a deſire to ſpeak with the ladies on the ſubject, but alone, leſt what I had to ſay ſhould affect the girl; on which Mrs. Alton, telling her that ſhe would ſee her releaſed and come for her preſently, requeſted Mrs. Ward to go with her to her room.

On their withdrawing I related the ſtory of William's death, with which I found the ladies acquainted, and they readily embraced my perſuaſion that Amy Norman was William's Amy. Mrs. Alton then told me that ſhe was the daughter of a man who had purchaſed a farm at Overton, and was amaſſing money when ſhe left the place; that Amy had often, while a child, been ad-

mitted to her houſe, and as ſhe grew up a well behaved, good girl, ſhe had continued to take notice of her: ſhe had been well educated for her ſtation in life, and though her manners were not thoſe of poliſhed ſociety, her principles were even refined and delicate. Mrs. Alton concluded with ſaying that ſhe was both ſurpriſed and grieved to find her in this ſituation, that ſhe ſhould take her home, put her under the care of Mr. Rundle, and write to her friends. She then reſumed the ſubject of my own impriſonment, ſaid ſhe believed Sir Nicholas to be a very bad man, and aſked why, as I was acquainted with Rundle, I had not applied to him. I ſaid I had been deterred by the reſult of my application

tion to the Vicar of Holcomb. "You have a very good friend in Rundle, I aſſure you," ſaid ſhe; "but I believe that, like ourſelves, he has been puzzled by the reports of the event at Broke-Hall. I will this morning tell him my opinion, and I am ſure you will ſee him." As ſhe uttered theſe words, the lock of the door was turned, the door held a little open, and Mrs. Ward, ſpeaking to a perſon on the outſide, ſaid; "Mr. Morland is not alone, ſir."—"Alone or not, I muſt ſee him immediately," replied a voice that went to my heart; I ran forward, and claſped Jones in my arms. "I little thought when we parted, Morland," cried he, "that we ſhould meet in a—" He ſtopped, gazed at Miſs Al-

ton, and exclaimed: "Is it poſſible?"—"Yes, my dear friend," ſaid the lovely girl, ſtepping towards him with her hand held out, "it is not only poſſible, but true."—"Dear, dear Sophia!" cried he, "what an age is it ſince I ſaw you! and to meet you in ſuch a place as this!"—"I wiſh we may have cauſe to think it a happy meeting," replied ſhe; "it will depend upon you. Indeed I am very ſorry to avoid you."—"Oh! promiſe me," cried he, "that you never will again. You know not what I have ſuffered by this ſeparation." Poor fellow! his pale face and unbraced muſcles teſtified his ſufferings. "I am truly grieved," ſaid ſhe, "to find you have been ill, but I can make you no pro-

miſe

mife that is not fanctioned by this lady: fhe is the friend of whom I wrote to you; my guardian angel, my adopted mother, who has united with my own beloved mother and father, to mark out for me a path of real enjoyment. She knows and refpects you; gain her efteem, and you will complete my happinefs."—"Make me what you pleafe, Sophia," faid Jones, "make me what you pleafe, madam," he repeated, turning to Mrs. Alton; "but do not banifh me any longer from your fociety. Condefcend to be my guardian angel alfo."—"My dear Sir," replied Mrs. Alton, "I am happy to fee you, and by and by I will freely communicate my fentiments to you; but let us recollect ourfelves,

let us recollect the place and the occasion of our unexpected meeting. Our business makes it necessary that we should now leave you with your friend, who I assure you has extremely interested us in his behalf." —"You will not leave me," exclaimed Jones, with a look of the greatest anxiety; "you will not, at least, go before you tell me who you are, and where you live."—"I cannot, if I would," replied she, "conceal from you my name and place of residence, for both are known, not only to the keeper of this prison, but to your friend; I do not, however, wish it. You know the Hut on the Ex, and in us you see the inhabitants of it, Mrs. and Miss Alton."—"Sophia Nevill, Miss Alton!"

ton!" exclaimed he, "Sophia Nevill, Morland's cottager!"—"This rapture," ſaid Mrs. Alton, "this forgetfulneſs of the melancholy offices that brought us hither, convinces me, Mr. Jones, that it is not yet time for us to cultivate our friendſhip—and—" Jones conſciouſly caſt down his eyes in ſilence: Miſs Nevill's, which I watched, were fixed upon him with an expreſſion of grief, that was, however, mixed with a ſoftneſs, in which I read a hope that reſolutions formed in abſence, and at moments when her ſoul was agitated with the moſt painful reflections, would be overcome by the ſociety and perſeverance of her lover; I therefore did not ſuffer Mrs. Alton

Alton to finiſh her ſentence, in which I foreſaw a prohibition of his viſiting the Hut—" Forgive me madam," ſaid I, " for interrupting you; and permit me to obſerve, that Mr. Jones and I have much time before us, whereas he has but a few minutes to aſcertain the certainty of paying his reſpects to you. Your goodneſs to me, the countenance you have promiſed me in the dreadful poſition in which I am ſoon to appear publicly, would be rendered ſo grateful, ſo heartening to me, by the intervention of my friend, that I truſt you will allow me to owe to this meeting a conſolation which Providence appears to have ordained for me,"—" I am ſo well ſatisfied of

your

your innocence," replied Mrs. Alton, "that I would refuſe you no conſolation in my power. Mr. Jones," continued ſhe, addreſſing my friend, "in one converſation we ſhall thoroughly underſtand each other: we are at preſent going to procure the liberation of an unfortunate young woman who is confined here, to-morrow I am engaged, but come the day after, and ſpend an hour with me at the Hut." Saying which ſhe rang the bell, while Jones expreſſed his thanks, and Mr. Ward opening the door, ſhe and Miſs Nevill bade us good day, and left the priſon. Jones riveted his eyes on Sophia as ſhe paſſed, nor were hers averted from him, till the ſhutting of the door obſtructed their ſight.

As ſoon as ſhe was gone, Jones preſſed my hand and begged me to forgive him for ſuffering his thoughts to be diverted from my misfortunes: "but, Morland," ſaid he, "judge of my ſurpriſe, and of my apprehenſion by their abſorbing my faculties at ſuch a moment." He then told me that he had left London before he received my letter communicating the event at Broke-Hall and my ſituation, which a ſervant who had been left in town had brought on to the firſt ſtage. "I cannot," ſaid he, "expreſs how much the intelligence ſhocked us all. My father, well knowing that the effect on my mind was more likely to cauſe a relapſe than a little bodily fatigue, propoſed himſelf that we ſhould

ſhould make the journey in two days inſtead of four, as was at firſt intended. We are but juſt arrived. I begged to be ſet down at Rundle's as the coach paſſed through the town: Rundle was not at home, my father went on with my mother and ſiſter to Affington, and I haſtened hither. My dear Morland, I am wretched at the dilemma into which the villany of Sir Nicholas has thrown you. It is very clear he ſeeks your life, and will, if poſſible, make the death of his ſon the means of gratifying his revenge, but I truſt in God your innocence will appear: it almoſt ſpeaks for itſelf; you ſee that both Mrs. Alton and Sophia are convinced —Oh! how charmed I am to think that *ſhe* ſought you—" I interrupted Jones,

Jones, to ſet him right in this particular: I told him the occaſion of the ladies viſiting the priſon, and our opinion reſpecting Amy Norman, with which he immediately concurred. I then related to him more at large than I had been able to do in my letter, the occurrences at Broke-Hall, prefaced with an account of myſelf and of my feelings from the laſt time I ſaw him, in which he ſympathized with the true ardour of friendſhip. I concluded my narrative by expreſſing the pain I felt at having made a ſecret enemy, and the total loſs I was at to trace him. "That," ſaid Jones, "I have done: any man who wiſhes to conceal himſelf from me muſt not make a confident of my father. It is to Hewſon

ſon we are ſo much obliged: but he is not ſuch a villain as Murphy. The fool thought he was doing right, and therefore we muſt forgive him, though his modes of acting are not thoſe of a liberal mind. It ſeems, he liſtened to our converſation, and conceived it to be his duty to inform my father of what he had gathered from it."—"That," ſaid I, "we may impute to a defective judgment, but in his communication to Mr. Jones, he deſcended to downright falſehood." — "I did not know," ſaid Jones, "whether my father detected the falſehood, or paſſed over that circumſtance through his accuſtomed humanity: but ſince I have been with you, I have diſcovered that the ſtupid fellow did not mean to tell a falſe-

a falſehood, in ſaying you had found out Sophia's retreat. He knew of our ramble to the Hut, of your having previouſly ſeen the ſuppoſed Miſs Alton, and jumbling his ideas with the letter you had found for me, he compoſed his very virtuous communication. I now plainly perceive that my father was acquainted with Sophia's plan, and that, wiſhing it ſucceſs, he thought it proper to keep a knowledge of her reſidence from me. When I received his letter in which he charged me to join him without a moment's delay, I was unhappy, becauſe I gueſſed the motive to be his apprehenſion of my diſcovering Sophia during her ſtay in Devonſhire, which I did not doubt he knew. The vexation at not ſeeing

ing you, the hurry of my journey, the wretched ſtate of my heart, the painful reflection on the oppoſition of my father's ſentiments and mine, ſowed the ſeeds of an illneſs which the firſt interview I had with him confirmed. He frankly told me the intelligence he had received from Hewſon, without concealing his name, renewed his former arguments, and preſſed me in the warmeſt manner to conquer an attachment, of which the ſucceſs muſt, he ſaid, be attended with ſuch painful conſequences. I as freely acknowledged the ſtate of my mind, informed him of our accidental meeting in the alcove at Afſington, and of the friendſhip that had been the reſult of it, aſſuring him that far from carrying on any clan-

clandeftine correfpondence, you had advifed me to open my heart to him and to fhow him Sophia's letter. He gave full credit to all I faid, and fpoke very kindly of you. Habituated to confide in me, he wanted no corroboration of my truth; but it fo happened that Hewfon's conduct produced a confirmation of what I faid refpecting you. I wrote you a letter, which being brought back from your lodgings, I left at Affington to be fent again: Hewfon, however, thought proper to enclofe it to my father. It contained an expreffion of my feelings, both as to you and Sophia, I took notice of your advice refpecting my father, and affured you of my determination to follow it. This letter arrived

rived a few hours after me, and my father gave it to me unopened, but I immediately broke the ſeal and put it into his hands. In the evening I ſat down to write you an account of theſe circumſtances, but I was too ill to proceed. I went to bed, a violent fever came on, I became delirious in the courſe of the night, and when I recovered my ſenſes, I found my mother and ſiſter ſitting by me. I continued ill, and was thought to be in great danger. My father, to relieve my ſpirits of all their burden, declared that he would not oppoſe my happineſs, and that he gave me free permiſſion to addreſs Sophia. He alſo talked of you whenever the doctors allowed him to converſe with me, and the latter part of my ſick-

neſs

neſs was rendered delightful by his dwelling on his intentions and plans for you. The account my mother and ſiſter gave of you helped to raiſe you in his opinion, and their ſentiments of Sophia infuſed the balm of health into my veins. I recovered faſt, but anxious leſt you ſhould not be able to account for my ſilence, I got Louiſa to write to you for me. I have already told you the effect the knowledge of your ſituation produced upon us, and I have only to add, that my father, thoroughly convinced of your honour, is determined to ſupport you by every means in his power. He will ſee you to-morrow, and ſpeak for himſelf." Jones having finiſhed his account of the interval that had elapſed ſince we

were

were ſeparated, continued with me converſing on topics relative to my ſituation, and to my approaching trial, and ſometimes, led by me, on ſubjects equally intereſting in my opinion; on the inhabitants of the Hut, and on the inhabitants of Afſington-Houſe. We eat our dinner together in my little room, and he did not leave me till I compelled him, by ſhowing my anxiety that he ſhould be at home before the day cloſed.

CHAP. XXIV.

Visits in Prison.—Poetical Justice legally executed.—An Attorney employed.—Evidence obtained from Thomas.—Sequel of Sophia's Story.

CONFINED in a prison, charged with murder, prosecuted by one of the most powerful men in the country, I nevertheless passed the night in the most delightful reflections, by the enchantment of which I was kept awake till long after day-light. I rose late, and my little room was scarcely put to rights before I had a visit

visit from Mr. Rundle. He gave me his hand, and in a kind manner expressed his belief of my innocence. He informed me that Mrs. Alton had been with him the day before, but that he had not been able to see me, having, besides some professional business, been occupied in the commission she had given him, which was to counteract the effect of the reports from Broke-Hall. "I shall continue my diligence I assure you," said he, "and I trust that the horrid impression which has been made will be completely removed long before your trial." He then told me that Mrs. Alton had procured the discharge of Amy Norman, and had taken her home with her. He said that he did not think the girl's pre-

ſent derangement of mind was likely to be a confirmed malady, that he ſhould attend her, and that perhaps a few days quiet, and kind treatment, would reſtore regularity to the train of her thoughts. "I muſt now leave you," ſaid Mr. Rundle, "and you may think me unkind when I tell you that I have forbidden your friend Jones to quit Affington to-day. However, it is abſolutely neceſſary that he ſhould reſt, his journey has been too great an exertion for him." I aſſured him that I conſidered his prohibition as a proof of his goodneſs. "To conſole you, however," ſaid he, "I have brought you a packet that will both ſurpriſe and pleaſe you: I will not anticipate its contents." Saying which he put the

packet into my hand, and promiſing to ſee me ſoon again, went away.

On opening the packet I found two letters in an envelope from Jones. The letters were both directed to Robert Nevill, Eſq. Ex-Mount. On Jones's envelope were the following few lines from himſelf. " Rundle, ſeconded by my mother and ſiſter, compels me to remain at home to-day; you will, however, ſee my father. I called at Ex-Mount after I left you yeſterday, and was intruſted by Mrs. Nevill with the encloſed, which I ſend to you, knowing the intereſt you will take in them. They are from Col. Nevill, who is juſt arrived from India. To-morrow morning I ſpend

my promiſed hour at the Hut, from which I ſhall ride immediately to you. Keep up your ſpirits." The encloſures were as follows:

Saliſbury, Oct. 1.

"My dear Sir,

"Having long reſolved that on my arrival, in England I would waſh out the ſtain that had been caſt on our family before I joined them, I wrote a few lines to Mr. Montague, directed to his houſe, deſiring an immediate meeting, to which I had no reply for ſeveral days. At length I received the following anſwer which I copy verbatim. 'Mr. Montague will not diſappoint Colonel Nevill, but is under a phyſical impoſſibility of meeting him at preſent. The im-

impediment will be removed in the courſe of this week, and ſhould Colonel Nevill be then near Saliſbury he may hear of Mr. Montague at the Caſtle-Inn.' Saliſbury being on my way, I immediately went thither with a determination to remain there till the time appointed. Gueſs my ſurpriſe when I learned that he was a priſoner, and to be tried at the Aſſizes for ſhooting a Mr. Betteſworth in a duel. The judges, who are now on the circuit, are expected in this town to-morrow, and it is ſaid he will be tried on Friday. I ſhall wait the event of the trial and inform you of the particulars as ſoon as it is over. In the mean time keep this letter to yourſelf. Your laſt letters reſpecting Sophia gave me infinite

pleaſure: I never blamed her, as the villany of Montague ſpoke for itſelf. I truſt ſhe has received my laſt, which was written a very ſhort time before I left Bengal. I hope to be with you ſoon, but do not be uneaſy at any delay. I am confident you would rather I ſhould never come again to Ex-Mount, than appear there while this villain is on earth. I am,

"My dear Sir,

"Your affectionate ſon,

"ROB. NEVILL, Junr."

Anxious to know the event, I took no time to add reflection to the ſurpriſe this letter created, but haſtened through the other:

"My

"My dear Sir,

"Enquiring who the judges on this circuit were, I found that one of them was our old friend Boteler, on whom I called yesterday afternoon. You will have the pleasure of seeing him at Exeter in the course of his journey. He soon knew me, and I had a very pleasant hour's chat with him. I went to the court this morning in his retinue, and through the interference of the officers who attended, obtained a seat on the bench near him, so that I distinctly heard the whole of Montague's trial. I have not time to enter into a minute account of it. There certainly never was a more accomplished villain. It appeared that he had been long betraying the

confidence repoſed in him by the Betteſworth family, and that his treachery was only diſcovered in conſequence of Miſs Betteſworth's loſs of health, which terminated in her diſſolution. A little before ſhe died ſhe wrote him a very pathetic letter intreating to ſee him. The letter opened by her father, revealed the dreadful cauſe of her death. The unhappy man gave it to his ſon, who inſtantly wrote a challenge to Montague, then at Bath. The meeting took place near Warminſter: they fired together, and Betteſworth fell at the firſt ſhot. Some obſervations of one of the ſeconds having led to a ſuſpicion of the meeting, meaſures were taken to prevent it, but too late. The apprehending of Montague,

gue, however, was the confequence. The counfel for the profecution were inftructed to animadvert on his character, which I found was already well known to the judge. When called upon for his defence he fpoke with aftonifhing eloquence, and a confidence equal to that of an experienced counfel. He endeavoured to remove the odium that had been excited by the account of his character, expreffed a deteftation of duelling, in an act of which, he faid, he had been involved againft his will, and he excepted to the indictment, which he laboured like a lawyer to prove defective in point of form. His eloquence and ingenuity, however, availed him little: there was no flaw in the indictment, the

faſt of his ſhooting young Betteſworth was fully proved, and the jury, whoſe indignation he could not extinguiſh, found him guilty of murder. The addreſs of the judge on paſſing ſentence of death was extremely pathetic, as well as dignified and moral. I believe every eye in the court, Montague's excepted, was filled with tears, at the picture he drew of the miſerable conſequences of ſeduction, particularly applied to the caſe before him. His family, anticipating the poſſibility of an unfavourable verdict, have been making powerful intereſt to obtain a pardon, ſhould it be neceſſary, and the judge was requeſted by ſome perſons of great diſtinction and influence to ſuſpend the execution of the ſentence. This appli-

application being made previous to Montague's leaving the bar, the judge called to him, and having commanded ſilence, addreſſed him, as nearly as I can remember, in the following words: 'Priſoner, attend. Some gentlemen near me, thinking that I can ſuſpend the execution of the law, have hinted that a pardon is expected from our conſtitutional ſource of mercy, and have in conſequence ſolicited a reprieve for you. There is a ſtatute which ordains that a criminal convicted of murder ſhall ſuffer on the next day but one after the paſſing of his ſentence, unleſs there is good and ſufficient cauſe for the judge to reſpite the execution. Now, I think it incumbent upon me to prevent your waſting the few

awful

awful hours of life yet remaining for you, in the vain hopes which you may be diſpoſed to build on the influence of your friends. I have already given you ſuch admonitions as I think adapted to your ſituation; I only mean to enforce them by aſſuring you that ſo far from conſidering your caſe as one that calls for a relaxation of the law, I am of opinion, that mercy ſhown to men of ſuch habits, would be the height of cruelty to the community. I ſhall certainly not interfere with the progreſs of the law. Make the moſt of the ſhort time before you." Montague, not the leaſt diſconcerted, ſmiled, and without bowing, withdrew with the officers: on which the judge called the ſheriff, and telling

ing him in a low voice that he conceived by the priſoner's appearance, that he was likely to anticipate the execution of the law, directed him to have him ſearched, and ſtrictly watched, and to take care that no means of ſelf-deſtruction were left in his power. His maternal uncle, Lord Colney, and ſeveral of his relations inſtantly ſet off poſt for the court, with a hope of returning in time with a pardon. There *is* time, as Sunday intervenes, but Judge Boteler is convinced that they will not ſucceed. He has engaged me to dine with him to-morrow, and I ſhall ſtay the event of Lord Colney's application; but I aſſure you not with an idea of meeting the wretched man I came in ſearch of, for, beſides that I believe

he

he will expiate his crimes by an ignominious death, I have received ſuch a leſſon from Boteler's admirable addreſs to the villain previous to paſſing ſentence, that I ſhould be very wretched at the thought of engaging in a duel. In the beginning of next week I hope to preſs you all in my arms, and in the mean time I remain,

"My dear Sir,

"Your affectionate Son,

"ROB. NEVILL, Junr."

The anger and deteſtation which had been excited in my mind by Montague's conduct, and which always accompanied it when I thought of it, ſuddenly yielded, on the peruſal of theſe letters, to the dreadful retribution

tribution now made; and I hoped that the mercy which it was proper to deny him on earth would be granted him elſewhere. I was ſtill reflecting on the ſcandalous life and dreadful death of this wretched creature, when Mr. Jones came in. His countenance wore its uſual benignity. He expreſſed his ſorrow at my ſituation with that attractive voice and manner which firſt attached me to him. He examined me as to the particulars of the affair at Broke-Hall, with my account of which he was perfectly ſatisfied. He ſaid he ſhould have pitied Sir Nicholas from his heart, as every body muſt have done, had he not ſo wickedly yielded to the paſſion of revenge in attempting to criminate me:

"for

"for, how dreadful," ſaid he, "muſt his feelings be, when he conſiders that his ſon fell by his own hand. What puzzles me," continued Mr. Jones, "is, that when the offence he meant to puniſh is ſo evidently more his daughter's than your's, even admitting that you knew of it, he ſhould not have declared the truth, and exculpated you in that reſpect. It keeps the opinion of the public divided: all his connexions and their friends, who amount to a great number, are decidedly your enemies; and that villain Murphy has prejudiced others. Sir Nicholas, however, is by no means generally liked, and there are many who agree with us in believing your ſtory to be the true one." Mr. Jones then informed me that as every

every body was talking of me, every body of courſe aſked who I was. He had ſeen Mr. Whitaker, who had corroborated the account I had given of myſelf, and the circumſtances had intereſted many in my favour. He ſaid, that upon the whole, he had great hope, that inſtead of being injured I ſhould be benefited by a trial. Having continued talking for ſome time on what immediately concerned the ſituation I was in, Mr. Jones condeſcended to converſe freely with me on the ſubject of his ſon's attachment. "I was extremely anxious," ſaid he, "to divert John's affections to another object, and I thought it practicable; but in this one inſtance I was unacquainted with his heart, which

which I ſee is not to be turned from its firſt poſſeſſor. She is indeed a noble girl, I do not think there is a nobler upon earth, yet it is but very lately that I have been able to reconcile to my mind the thoughts of their marriage; however, I am convinced that his happineſs depends upon it, and I am now as ſolicitous that it ſhould take place as I was formerly anxious that it ſhould not. I confeſs that I am at this moment very uneaſy leſt the event once ſo much dreaded by me is not to be accompliſhed. I have ſeen Miſs Nevill; ſhe is inexorable: her reſolution, ſhe ſays, is taken, to devote her life to religion and beneficent offices. This reſolution appears to be the baſis of the peace of mind ſhe has recovered.
Mrs.

Mrs. Alton aſſured me that ſhe would have fallen a ſacrifice to melancholy reflections had ſhe not taken this method of rouſing her into an enjoyment of exiſtence, and leading her to ſet a value upon life independent of the common joys and ſorrows that attend it. Her ſoul is exalted above this world; I am afraid we ſhall find it ſo to our ſorrow; for ſince I have witneſſed the exceſs of John's attachment, I dread to think in what his diſappointment may terminate." Delighted at this change in Mr. Jones's ſentiments I expreſſed my hope that the perſeverance of his ſon, and the united efforts of the families would be attended with ſucceſs. "Her brother too, ſir," added I, "will ſoon join the alliance: Colonel

Nevill

Nevill muſt now be on his way to Ex-Mount—" —"He arrived there late laſt night," ſaid Mr. Jones. "I ſaw him this morning. You know that the villain Montague was found guilty of murder by a jury at Saliſbury?" I replied in the affirmative, telling him that I had ſeen Colonel Nevill's letters, and was impatient to hear the iſſue of Lord Colney's ſolicitation for a pardon.—"The wretch has paid the forfeit of his crimes," ſaid Mr. Jones, "his friends returned to Saliſbury, with a decided negative. It ſeems that he had not a doubt of obtaining a pardon through the intereſt uſed for him, and he kept up his ſpirits till the dreadful truth was made known to him, which was early on Monday morning,

ing, when he exclaimed, "Great God!" his countenance fell, he turned pale, and ſuddenly became depreſſed and abject. Totally forgetting his ſituation and that of the ſheriff, he ſupplicated the delay of a few days, to confeſs the errors of his life, and abjure his vicious ſentiments, as an atonement to ſociety. He became wild, and ſtruggled with the officers who went to carry him to the place of execution. At the gallows he begged time for prayer, and abuſed the permiſſion by a long delay. All decent fortitude had forſaken him, and he whoſe courage no man had ever doubted, who had ſeveral times coolly ſtaked his life in ſupport of his crimes, could not bear to face death when it was certain, and the

the punifhment of guilt. He would not rife from his knees, and tne executioner was obliged to drive the cart from under him in that pofture." What a dreadful picture was this of the once bold, elegant, handfome, accomplifhed Montague! what a contraft to the being who for years had in his heart defied both God and man! But let him reft, I have other objects that demand my pen, and fhall here only obferve, that, without expreffing it, I confidered his death as the removal of one great barrier to the accomplifhment of my friend's happinefs. Mr. Jones ftaid fome time longer with me, in the courfe of which he apologifed for fufpecting me on the information of Hewfon to have been active in

keeping

keeping Jones's paſſion alive. He ſaid that Hewſon meant well, though he was not bleſſed with that refinement which a liberal education beſtows. He told me that he had plans in view for me, but that it was not yet time to talk of them, the firſt object being my defence, in which he adviſed me to have counſel to aſſiſt in examining the witneſſes to be produced in court. To this I readily conſented, being afraid of wanting the neceſſary confidence on ſuch an occaſion: but, having promiſed Brainbridge to employ no other attorney, I reſolved to prepare my own caſe, to which Mr. Jones objected, ſaying that I was not ſufficiently acquainted with the proper arrangement of legal evidence, and adviſing

me to commiſſion him to make Brainbridge an additional compliment of a couple of guineas, and to ſend his own attorney, Mr. Heartly, to take inſtructions for my defence. Tears of gratitude ruſhed to my eyes; I ſaid that I was but too fortunate, that the hand of providence was very evident to me in the interference of ſuch a man, and I begged him to act in every reſpect as he pleaſed towards me. He replied in kind and encouraging language, and ſoon after went away.

This interview left a pleaſing impreſſion on my heart, and the reflections that aroſe from it were of the moſt flattering kind. Far from doubting that my innocence would appear,

appear, I anticipated a decent provision for the neceſſities of life, and exquiſite felicity in the enjoyment of a friendſhip that ſtood on ſo firm a foundation: but I never ſuffered my mind to wander to the contemplation of a bleſſing which I could not connect with my gratitude towards the father of Louiſa Jones.

In the courſe of an hour after Mr. Jones left me I was viſited by Mr. Heartly, to whom I repeated my ſtory, and we were conſulting on the production of evidence in my favour, when Thomas from Broke-Hall came in. From him we learned that Sir Nicholas was more than ever determined upon my deſtruction; that Lady Broke was inconſolable for the

fate of her maſk, in ſpite of all Mr. Dalby's exertions to amuſe her; that Miſs Broke was locked up and kept on bread and water; and that Murphy, though all muſic was at an end, went to Broke-Hall, and was frequently cloſeted with Sir Nicholas. Mr. Heartly, finding Thomas diſpoſed to ſerve me, made a great many enquiries of him. He ſaid that the baronet's piſtols were hanging where they always did, and that he had himſelf ſeen them there every day ſince he was laſt with me: "and yet," ſaid he, "they ſay the piſtol you ſhot the young ſquire with is in the coroner's keeping till the trial: now that can't be, for I will take my affidavit that the piſtols you had in your hands that night were no others than Sir Ni-

Nicholas's own piſtols."—"Are you ſo very ſure of that?" ſaid Mr. Heartly, "it will be of the utmoſt conſequence if it can be proved." —"I'll ſwear to it, ſir, if you pleaſe;" replied Thomas. "Very well, my good fellow," ſaid Mr. Heartly, "but it would be ſatisfactory if ſome other perſon could atteſt the ſame thing." On this Thomas ran over ſeveral names of thoſe who were preſent, obſerving, however, that he ſoon loſt ſight of the piſtols. Mr. Heartly then queſtioned him reſpecting Miſs Broke. "La! Sir," cried he, "Miſs Broke be one of the moſt frolicſome, forward young ladies I ever ſeed in my life: the butler can give a good account of ſhe. It's the common opinion of

all our ſervants that he has made Sir Nicholas a preſent of a grand-child: but time will ſhow." This was capital intelligence; and Mr. Heartly, after ſome more talk with Thomas, deſired him to be in the way in the afternoon, to aſſiſt in ſerving the ſubpœnas he ſhould ſend up to Broke-Hall, and congratulating me on the points we had gained went to prepare briefs for counſel. I ſpent the remainder of the day in anticipating a complete triumph, and far from fearing the event of a trial, became anxious for it.

The next morning I again ſaw Mr. Heartly and Mr. Rundle; but it was not till near four o' clock that Jones came to me. He was ſtill

pale,

pale, and his countenance bore the marks of fresh anxiety. "The conversation I have had with my father respecting you," said he, "has given some relief to my mind. I am glad you will have counsel—"—"Pray think not of me just now," cried I, interrupting him, "but tell me about Miss Nevill; tell me what has passed between you and Mrs. Alton"—"Sophia," replied he, endeavouring to restrain his emotions, "Sophia is determined to kill me. I have been the whole morning at the Hut without seeing her. She left it to avoid me: cruel, cruel Sophia!"—"Has she heard of the fate of Montague?" said I. "No," replied he, "Mrs. Alton tells me his name is never mentioned before her. Mrs. Alton,

Morland, is one of the moſt rational and moſt amiable of women. Were it not for the intereſt ſhe takes in my unhappy fate I ſhould be unable to endure it. She received me in the moſt friendly manner, and when I aſked for Sophia, aſſured me that it gave her pain to tell me that ſhe had gone from home to avoid a meeting. 'But come,' ſaid ſhe, 'ſit down, and let me fulfil my promiſe that you ſhould underſtand me in our firſt converſation. I love Sophia as a daughter, as ſuch I have adopted her, and ſhe is now the deareſt object of my heart in life. I ſee you are come prepared with arguments to convince me of the unreaſonableneſs of our plan, and to overturn our reſolution: now, I mean to ſave the time

time you would beſtow on reaſoning with me, and on ſoliciting my interference, by treating you with the utmoſt candour. But I muſt firſt beſeech you to govern your feelings—' 'Madam,' cried I, interrupting her, 'I intreat you to conſult your own feelings before you join the government of mine with a ſentence of deſpair.'—'Hear, and underſtand me,' replied ſhe, mildly; 'to give you hope would be to deceive you, and I therefore wiſh you not to extract any from the confidence I am about to repoſe in you, leſt your diſappointment be the more painfully felt. I have preſerved the life of the woman you love, reſtored her health, revived her ſelf-eſteem, and I know how valuable as well as how lovely

ſhe is. Every wiſh that I have formed for her has been accompliſhed; every wiſh but one: and that, which I believe will never be accompliſhed, is to ſee her beſtow her hand on you.' I leave you, Morland," ſaid Jones, "to conceive what an effect this unexpected declaration had on me. I ſtarted, I ſeized Mrs. Alton's hand, I looked as if I doubted my ſenſes. 'Is it poſſible?' cried I, 'is it poſſible! am I awake! If you are my friend, I muſt, I muſt hope!' 'This is what I feared,' ſaid ſhe, 'and it will be difficult for me to convince you of the contrary. Sophia's reſolution has been deliberately taken; but to judge how unalterably, you muſt hear the concluſion of her ſtory, which will make it ne-

neceſſary to tell you ſome of my own, but it ſhall be brief.' She then proceeded to relate ſome of the events of her own life, and the commencement of her friendſhip with Sophia:

'I am a couſin of Mr. Rundle's,' ſaid ſhe, 'and originally bore the ſame name. I was married early in life to a man little older than myſelf. He was a noble-minded youth, worthy the laſting attachment he inſpired me with. He had fortune and friends, but his active ſpirit had led him when a boy to embrace the profeſſion of a ſailor, in which he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf previous to our marriage. He was ſtill a lieutenant when we were united, but he was

promoted in the courſe of a few months, and appointed to the command of a ſhip. Our firſt ſeparation was our final one: he fell in the ſervice of his country. My grief was deep, and nearly occaſioned the loſs of my life when I gave birth to his daughter. The ſight of my infant reſtored me to a ſenſe of the value of my own exiſtence: I reſolved to mourn with leſs danger, to think of my huſband, and, remaining his widow, enjoy in imagination my attachment to him as long as it pleaſed God to leave me on earth after him, but at the ſame time to devote myſelf to his child. At firſt I lived ſometimes with Alton's relations, and ſometimes among my own, in the neighourhood of

Overton, where, as my Sophia, for her name too was Sophia, advanced in years I formed an eſtabliſhment of my own. I will not talk to you of the beauties and virtues that gradually opened and matured under the eyes of a happy mother; I will not paint the new felicity which it pleaſed the Almighty to beſtow upon me for ſome years; I will not dwell on the miſery that ſucceeded it; not, however, becauſe I am unable to bear the reflection, but becauſe I would haſten to a ſubject more intereſting to you; ſuffice it to ſay that I loſt my child in her nineteenth year. Her ſenſe, her talents, the love that united our hearts, the length of time we had paſſed together, all conſpired to over-

whelm

whelm my mind. I felt this blow even more than that which had been given by the loſs of her father: I ſunk under it; for more than two years an intermiſſion of reaſon took place; my child ſeemed perpetually before me, but I have no recollection of any occurrence during that time. At length my perceptions gradually became regular, I again knew the perſons and things about me; but a ſettled melancholy continued to prey upon my heart. I found no relief but in imaginary intercourſe with my Sophia and her father, till, with a view to confirm my hope that we ſhould again meet, I applied myſelf to ſearch in every diſcourſe and eſſay for the arguments that proved a reunion after

ter death of thoſe who loved in this world. This reading led me to the moſt intereſting topics of religion, and I was at laſt brought to that reſignation which it is the part of reaſon to promote in oppoſition to feeling, and which gives ſuch an advantage to thoſe who early cultivate the virtue of ſelf-command. The acquiſition, however, was gradual, nor was it complete till my care and attention were turned upon Miſs Nevill. My couſin Rundle, called into Hampſhire by family affairs, had ſeen me twice after my loſs of Sophia: the firſt time was while I was in that deplorable ſtate that prevented my being ſenſible of his preſence; the ſecond time he came to Overton I was in the progreſs of amendment.

ment. He was very kind, and his converſation was ſo agreeable to me that I greatly regretted his being ſettled at ſuch a diſtance. Some months had elapſed after his ſecond journey to Overton when I was ſurpriſed by a viſit from him in the autumn, two years ago. He came expreſsly for the purpoſe of painting to me the wretched ſituation of the Nevill family at that time, and to intereſt me in the fate of Sophia. He ſpoke warmly of her virtues: my imagination met his wiſh more than half-way, and before he made the propoſal which was the object of his viſit, I eagerly expreſſed a deſire to take her under my roof. I ſaw that I gave him great pleaſure: he told me, however, that he had not men-

mentioned his deſign to the Nevills, being determined firſt to ſound me on the ſubject. As we perfectly accorded, our plan was ſoon arranged. I accompanied my couſin to Exeter, he made the propoſal to Mr. and Mrs. Nevill, and I was introduced at Ex-Mount. Miſs Nevill, by no means out of danger, ſtill kept her room: her melancholy was not to be diverted, but ſhe became accuſtomed to hear me talk, and when at the end of a fortnight I opened our plan in the form of an invitation, ſhe embraced it with tears of gratitude, telling me that her mother had made her acquainted with the extent of my goodneſs. The phyſicians who attended her were of opinion that her caſe was hopeleſs, that ſhe might by

by care be kept alive for ſome time, but that a recovery would be little leſs than a miracle, recommending at the ſame time a change of air and of objects as the moſt likely means of ſucceſs. We contrived to remove her without a formal ſeparation from her father and mother: the former, wretched in mind and ſuffering from his wound, had not been permitted to ſee his daughter before my arrival, but on the arrangement of a plan for her, and after ſome ſerious converſation with Mrs. Nevill and myſelf, he became more reſigned, and he ſaw her ſeveral times. His returning fondneſs, however, had no power to reconcile her to herſelf: ſhe did not weep, nor did ſhe ſeem gratified with his renewed careſſes.

No particular day was fixed for our departure, but both Mr. and Mrs. Nevill for ſeveral days before we left Ex-Mount repeatedly promiſed to pay me a viſit in leſs than a month, and I ſtole Sophia away one morning under pretence of an airing.

'At firſt, I feared that I ſhould ſee the prediction of the phyſicians verified, but I had recourſe to the remedy which I had found beneficial to myſelf. I converſed with her on topics beyond this ſphere, I told her my own misfortunes, and I read to her the books that had been able to divide my attention with the cauſe of my malady, while at the ſame time I took the utmoſt care that her exerciſe and diet ſhould be

regular

regular and proportioned to her ſtrength. In a little while I ſaw a change for the better; I had fixed her atention, and the perpetual appeal to her reaſon at length began to gain ground againſt the tyranny of ſentiment. My joy could not have been greater had I given her birth than it was at this revival of her faculties and of her ſuſceptibility of rational enjoyment: and in being uſeful to my dear young friend I reaped great advantage for myſelf. She took the name of Alton, according to Rundle's plan, from her firſt coming into Hampſhire, and with thoſe whom I was bound at that period to admit to my houſe, I paſſed her as the child of a friend whom I had adopted; I conſtantly

ſtantly ſpoke of her as of my daughter, and ſhe was ſoon generally conſidered as ſuch. In the courſe of the year ſhe recovered her health perfectly; I was charmed with her good ſenſe and amiable qualities: I was convinced that ſhe loved me, I ſaw my own Sophia in her, and while I looked forward to a reunion with the beloved ſpirits who had left our world, I yielded my heart to the happineſs this lovely girl excited. Conſcious that her misfortune had not ariſen from any vice in herſelf, that ſhe had expiated her error, ſhe recovered her ſpirits with her health, but ſhe tempered them with reflection, and reſolved as I had done, never to marry. We agreed to devote

our

our lives to religion. Do not miſunderſtand me. We did not mean to become zealots, we did not think an officiouſneſs in religion acceptable to its divine object. Our reſolution was to addreſs him together regularly, to devote more than ordinary time to ſtudy his will, to keep it in mind, and to be active in the performance of it. To cultivate cheerfulneſs in choſen retirement, but not to forſake ſociety altogether; ſeeking that, however, in which we might be uſeful. This has actually been the courſe of our life for more than eighteen months paſt. Sophia is charmed with it. We have had repeated viſits from the Nevills, who are, if poſſible, fonder of their daughter than ever. Poor Mr. Nevill can-

cannot attain that resignation without which his happiness must remain embittered; I need not tell you that his health is still impaired. He could not live without Sophia for such intervals as were unavoidable from the distance between our dwellings, and at the beginning of this year he projected the plan of our removal into Devonshire, which we put into execution early in the Spring. He privately purchased the Hut which was then to be sold, and we had been here about a fortnight, when you accidentally met Mary coming in a post-chaise from Teignmouth, in the neighbourhood of which Sophia had been staying at a retired house with her father, while the workmen from Exeter were finish-

finiſhing ſome alterations at the Hut under my eye. He brought her home to me the day before, leaving her maid to follow with her things. From that time we have lived in a very retired manner, taking every caution, when we go abroad, to prevent Sophia's being recognized. Simpler dreſſes than thoſe ſhe was accuſtomed to wear formerly, and the change of name have ſucceeded beyond our expectation. Even to Mr. Jones our abode was unknown till his preſent return to to Affington; for her father, knowing his ſentiments, had kept the circumſtance from him as well as from every body elſe. Mr. Nevill has a bed at the Hut, and lives more here than at Ex-Mount, taking a delight to be

be nurſed by Sophia. Your meſſage by Mary made her very thoughtful: decided as to herſelf ſhe took your happineſs into conſideration; ſhe converſed with me upon the ſubject, and endeavoured to convince me that it concerned your honour to place your affections differently, as it did her's to remain unſhaken in the reſolution of continuing ſingle through life. She ſaid ſhe felt that this reſolution was the baſis of the eſteem ſhe had regained among thoſe who knew her ſtory, and that to change it, or even to waver about it, would be to forfeit that eſteem, and what was perhaps worſe, her own. Not only her relations would be diſappointed, but ſhe ſhould be execrated by your family. Theſe are her ſentiments. With reſpect to mine,' continued

Mrs. Alton, ‘I will frankly own to you that on this ſubject they are not in uniſon with her's. I think ſhe would not only make you happy, but that ſhe would be happier herſelf, and I aſſure you ſhe would make me happier. I know that ſhe has an angelic ſpirit, and it ought to have a greater range than it has at preſent: ſhe ſhould be at the head of a family, and the ſex ſhould learn from her how to recover an error or a falſe ſtep which proceeds from the villany of men, not from inherent vice. So far from loſing the eſteem ſhe has gained, the part of her ſtory which remains unknown would be generally ſpread, and the moſt religious and the moſt virtuous would be the foremoſt and the higheſt in their applauſe. I have urged theſe ſen-

ſentiments to her, but I am ſorry to ſay I have only made her unhappy. What is more, your father has been ſuing for you with the ſame effect. He yeſterday propoſed your union to Mr. Nevill who brought him here. Nevill was neutral. Sophia reſted her oppoſition on the virtue ſhe ſees in adhering to her reſolution, and on her friendſhip for yourſelf. She declared that ſhe loved you, but that ſhe preferred your honour and the principle ſhe had adopted to any proſpect, however flattering. She ſhed tears at the kindneſs Mr. Jones laviſhed upon her, and was at laſt ſo affected that the conference was broken up without any concluſion. She ſecluded herſelf the greater part of the reſt of the day,

and is now abſent becauſe I expect-ed you.'

"Such, my dear Morland," continued Jones, "is the ſequel of Sophia's ſtory, which I have given you in the words of Mrs. Alton, as they were impreſſed upon my memory, and as they are more intereſting than mine would have been."

I was extremely gratified with this account of my friend's lovely miſtreſs, and even the difficulties raiſed to his happineſs, though I wiſhed them removed, charmed me, for they rendered her the more worthy of him. I ſaid every thing I could to relieve his anxiety, and we ſpent ſome hours endeavouring to find hope for him

him in Mrs. Alton's converſation, and talking of the evidence to be produced for and againſt me at my trial.

CHAP. XXV.

Containing ſuch ſurpriſing Events that ill-natured Critics will adduce them as Illuſtrations of the Marvellous.

SELDOM has it been the fortune of a priſoner to receive ſuch conſolation as fell to my lot. Misfortune poured friends upon me; a priſon allured viſitors: my cauſe divided the whole country into two parties; my innocence being openly eſpouſed by all the friends of the Joneses and Nevills, while I was pronounced guilty by all the connexions of the Broke family. The intereſt excited by the approaching trial was unexampled

ampled; every lodging in Exeter was beſpoken for the enſuing aſſizes; every room, every ſtreet echoed with the name of Morland; poor Morland! the unknown orphan adopted by the brewer's widow, left deſtitute by her death, doomed to a philoſophical livery by the humane miſanthrope of Reading, to canonicals by the taſteful lady of Broke-Hall, and to a halter by her huſband.

The ſolemn criſis now drew nigh, the judges had finiſhed their buſineſs at Dorcheſter and were proceeding to Exeter. It was at this awful moment, two days previous to the opening of the ſeſſions, that I received a haſty, unaccountable note from Jones, brought by a poſt-boy, containing theſe few words: "I

have only time to ſay that I ſhall not be with you again for ſome days, but be aſſured that you ſhall ſee me before the trial." To this was added his initials only: the whole was written with a pencil on the back of an old letter, and unſealed. It made me extremely uneaſy, as I feared ſomething dreadful reſpecting Miſs Nevill, for I was certain that no other cauſe on earth would have ſeparated him from me at this juncture. The poſt-boy, whom I queſtioned, could give me no farther information than that he ſet out before daylight, accompanied by a middle-aged lady, in a chaiſe with four horſes, which had taken him as faſt as they could lay feet to the ground to Honiton, where he only ſtopped to write the note, a re-

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lay of the ſame number of horſes having been got ready by an out-rider to go forward to Axminſter. I imagined the lady to be Mrs. Alton, and that they were perhaps gone after Miſs Nevill, who, I took it into my head, had returned to Overton. My anxiety increaſed when I found I could gain no ſatisfactory explanation either from Rundle or Mr. Jones himſelf, who did not fail to viſit me. They avoided my queſtions, by ſaying they were in the dark reſpecting the object of his journey, but were not uneaſy about him, as his family now concurred in *all* his ſentiments. I could hardly abſtract my thoughts ſufficiently from Jones to attend fully to Mr. Heartly's converſation on the preparation for my trial, or to read the briefs which he left in my hands

hands till the counſel came to town In ſhort I was bewildered in a labyrinth of inexplicable ſurmiſes, and when I heard that the judges were arrived I was extremely diſpirited, for I had placed great reliance on having Jones preſent at my trial, and in ſpite of his note I dreaded an impoſſibility of his return in time.

The ſeſſions were opened. Judge Boteler ſat on the criminal ſide. I expected to be carried into court the firſt day, but it was ſpent in trying a number of petty offences. Jones was ſtill abſent. The next day came, and the court was again opened, but I heard nothing of him. The keeper gave me notice that I ſhould be called up in the courſe of the morning; Jones was ſtill away.

In ſpite of the encouragement of his father, Rundle, and ſome other friends, I felt a great dejection; I thought I perceived ſomething of myſtery in their manner, and I ſuſpected that though they wiſhed me well, they feared the evidence againſt me was too ſtrong to be repelled. I was confirmed in this ſuſpicion from knowing that Mr. Jones was one of the grand jury, and I conceived that he had prevented the return of my friend that he might run no riſk from being preſent at an unfavourable verdict. Theſe were my reflections when the keeper, Mr. Ward, came himſelf for me. I accompanied him with a heavineſs of heart more oppreſſive than all I had ever felt before. The ſuit of mourning which I had purchaſed out of

reſpect to Mrs. Waller, and which I had ceaſed to wear on going to Broke-Hall, was ſtill in good condition, and I dreſſed myſelf in it on this occaſion. In going into court I ſummoned all my reſolution to appear with the confidence and ſerenity of innocence, leſt my dejection ſhould give any colour to the charge againſt me; and when put to the bar I really felt a compoſure that enabled me to attend and to act deliberately. The court was crouded to exceſs: the gallery belonging to the grand jury was filled with ladies; on the bench with the judge ſat a number of gentlemen, among whom I perceived Mr. Jones near his lordſhip on the one ſide, and Sir Nicholas Broke on the other, the former looking likean angel of light, the latter like

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a demon of darkneſs. Diſperſed through the court I obſerved ſeveral faces with which my impriſonment had made me acquainted. There was not a ſpot unoccupied, except a ſeat betwen the judge and the ſheriff on the bench, the box kept vacant for the witneſſes, and a little ſpace among the counſel, which ſeemed reſerved for ſome of their friends. Every eye was turned on me. After the ſolemnity of arraignment, to which I pleaded not guilty, I addreſſed the judge; for my counſel were at a diſtance from me, ſitting below the bench; I ſaid: "My Lord, charged as I am with ſo horrible an offence, it is natural for me to wiſh to have the advantage of a teſtimony that might lay open to you and to the jury who are to pro-

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nounce my fate the nature of my opinions and ſentiments in hours of ſecurity and confidence. I did hope, my Lord, to have heard an account of me given to you by one, whoſe honour, integrity, and noble mind are well known to your Lordſhip; an account which no one elſe can give ſo well, however favourably diſpoſed towards me, as there is no one with whom I have been ſo familiar, ſo unreſerved. Till within a few days he has been my conſtant companion in priſon; he is now, I know not why, abſent, but I expect him back every minute: were I not afraid of encroaching on your lordſhip's time I would ſolicit you to defer my trial another day, in the hope of receiving the ſupport of his teſtimony." As I ſaid this, Mr. Jones whiſpered to the ſheriff,

ſheriff, who immediately ſpoke to the judge, on which his Lordſhip ſaid to me: "It is no leſs my duty than my inclination to give every indulgence to perſons in your ſituation, when it appears that no abuſe of lenity is intended: but I have juſt received information from the ſheriff reſpecting the gentleman you allude to, which would render the indulgence you crave nugatory." I was now convinced that Jones was purpoſely ſent away, and I prepared to ſuſtain the event of my trial with firmneſs.

The jury being ſworn and the indictment read, the counſel for the proſecution ſtated the accuſation againſt me at length, ſaying that he had poſitive proofs to ſatisfy the

court

court and jury that after corrupting the daughter of a man of diſtinguiſhed family and fortune, I had deprived his only ſon of his life in ſuch a manner as by the law was conſidered in the light of murder. I felt myſelf extremely agitated by his language, and was more than once going to interrupt him, when I recollected that it was the common harangue on all ſimilar caſes. Having ſtated the legal definitions of murder, and diſtinguiſhed them from thoſe of manſlaughter and other homicides, and declaimed againſt ingratitude and ſeduction, he concluded his ſpeech with aſſuring the Jury that it would give him great pleaſure to find, upon hearing the evidence, that there was no foundation for the charge againſt me; but that from the inſtructions he had received,

ceived, my crimes appeared to him much deeper than he had allowed himfelf to defcribe previous to the examination of the witneffes. He faid that the fuperabundant weight of evidence he found on his brief rendered it unneceffary for him to torture the feelings of a parent, and that he fhould therefore prove the charges againft the prifoner without calling upon Sir Nicholas Broke, who was, however, in court, fubpœnaed by the prifoner, on what ground he could not conceive, unlefs it was to add to injuries already but too dreadful. He then ordered Murphy to be called. While the officers were calling him, the tipftaffs were crying, "make way for the counfel," and endeavouring to open a paffage, which they with difficulty effected,

effected, and I ſaw, to my great aſtoniſhment, a young counſel puſhing forward, followed by Jones, and almoſt at the ſame time Mrs. Alton led by the ſheriff to the ſeat on the bench next to the judge. Jones, as he paſſed, looked at me with a cheerful, animated countenance, nodded and ſmiled. He took a ſeat with my counſel facing me, and directly under the judge. As he and Mrs Alton had engaged all my attention at the moment, I did not notice the face of a perſon who appeared to take the advantage of puſhing on with him, till I ſaw him alſo ſeated with my counſel, and then to my ſurpriſe I recognized my old and firſt friend, Mr. Scot, the Curate of Reading. We immediately acknowledged each other by looks, and I expreſſed

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as much gratitude as I could by my countenance, for the intereſt he continued to take in my unhappy exiſtence. To put himſelf to the expence of ſuch a journey, merely to ſpeak in my favour retroſpectively, was a new proof of extraordinary benevolence under the exterior of miſanthropy. Jones's return again puzzled me, I was wrong in my ſurmize of his father's ſending him out of the way, and it was clear that the judge had proceeded with the trial on being informed that he was at hand. I had no time, however, to indulge conjecture, for Murphy was now in the witneſſes' box. He was dreſſed, if poſſible, more foppiſhly than when I firſt obſerved his transformation, except that he had not a coloured neckcloth. When the oath

was

was adminiſtered, I ſhuddered as he kiſſed the book. Great God! thought I, with what deliberation does this creature perjure himſelf! And is it in nature that a friendly reprehenſion, that the rebuke of a little perſonal vanity, that an interference to prevent moral corruption, ſhould have engendered ſuch villany in the mind of a human being! Alas! time has proved to me that Murphy is not a ſolitary example of this depravation of nature. At firſt, on being told by the counſel to ſtate what he knew, he gave his evidence roundly, larding it with argumentative inferences to ſhow its truth, from which he could not be reſtrained by the repeated admonition of the judge to confine himſelf to facts. He declared that he ſaw Miſs

Miſs Broke go into my chamber, and he inferred ſeduction from her previous attentions to me, particularly on the day of the rehearſal. He prided himſelf on having given notice of what was paſſing to Sir Nicholas, and ſwore poſitively that I blew out my candle to avoid being ſeen; that as he and Sir Nicholas came up to the door he heard Mr. Broke, who had run on firſt, call me a villain, on which I fired at him. He declared that he entered the room in time to ſee the flaſh of the piſtol; that Sir Nicholas caught hold of my hands, deſiring him to run for lights, which he immediately did, and on returning with them, joined by ſome of the company in the houſe, he found Sir Nicholas ſtruggling with me, and ſo exhauſted that he let go

my hands with the piſtols in them, and ſwooned. On being croſs examined by my counſel, it appeared that he had ſworn poſitively to my blowing out the candle from inferring that Mr. Broke would not have done it, and that therefore I did. He ſwore alſo poſitively to the piſtols which were now produced, and ſaid they were the piſtols taken out of my hands. I had not the leaſt recollection of them. Murphy prevaricated a great deal on his croſs examination, and attempted to give inferences for proofs, which, together with his dreſs and ſelf-conceit, diſguſted all preſent. He was ſucceeded in his evidence by perſons who proved the fact of Miſs Broke's being in the chamber. After theſe the coroner, and the ſurgeon, who examined

mined the body of the unfortunate young man, gave their teſtimony, with which the evidence on the part of the crown cloſed. The judge then told me it was the time for me to make my defence. I looked from him to Mrs. Alton, and then to Mr. Jones, whoſe countenances were full of encouragement. In Jones's face I read thorough confidence; in that of Sir Nicholas I ſaw conſcience ſtruggling with the devil; in addition to his downlook his jaws ſeemed unnaturally fixed, as if in the act of grinding his teeth. Before I ſpoke, I ſurveyed him nearly a minute ſteadily but mildly, during which he could not look me firmly in the face. This could not but be obſerved by every perſon in court, whoſe eyes were caſt alternately

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on my profecutor and on me. A dead filence prevailed from the eagernefs to hear what I had to fay for myfelf. It was the moft awful moment of my life. In attempting to addrefs the court, I no fooner uttered; "My lord!" than I found my voice fail me Obferving that I hefitated, the judge faid; "fpeak firmly, you fhall be heard with every indulgence. If you know yourfelf to be innocent, the reflection fhould give you confidence." Roufed by this excitement, I renewed my addrefs:

"My lord," cried I, "I am fenfible, whatever be my fate, that I have a fair trial, and that I receive every indulgence my unhappy fituation claims. Your Lordfhip has called upon me for my defence. How

How ſhall I make one when the beſt I have to ſay depends upon my own word and upon the kind opinion I have lately gained in the minds of ſome worthy men? The proofs againſt me have been given poſitively, while what I have to allege can only be favourable circumſtances. I am an unfortunate being, my lord, ignorant from whence I ſprung, gifted, I know not why, with the education of a gentleman, and unexpectedly thrown upon the world to make my way through it as well as I can. I will give your Lordſhip a brief account of myſelf, as there are ſome reſpectable characters preſent who are able to corroborate it."—I here related ſhortly the chief events of my life at Reading and Oxford; the curate's counſel and my
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repugnance to it, the kindneſs I received from Mr. Jones, and the friendſhip his ſon had honoured me with on hearing my ſtory, omitting, however, all that related to Miſs Nevill. When I came to the part of my hiſtory that occurred at Broke-Hall, I mentioned the circumſtances that had gained me Lady Broke's favour, without blending them with ridicule, and I ſtated Sir Nicholas's manner of looking at me, and his intention to have me ſent out of his houſe, with as much ſimplicity and moderation as I could. I ſpoke of my ſitting in the alcove, and declared that I had hardly entered my room when Mr. Broke came in, and blew out my candle. In giving an account of the events that immediately cauſed my impriſon-

ſonment, I found it difficult to ſpeak of Miſs Broke, and I aſſured the judge that I wiſhed to paſs over her conduct unnoticed, both on account of her youth and ſex: "I ſhall ſimply declare, my lord," ſaid I, "that as I hope for mercy from the omniſcient, who knows what is paſſing in the boſoms of all men, in mine as well as in Sir Nicholas Broke's, I neither knew, nor in the ſlighteſt degree ſuſpected, that that young lady was in my chamber, till ſhe was found there by ſome of the company who had been drawn thither by the report of the piſtol that proved fatal to her brother. I ſhudder to ſay by whom it was fired—my lord, it was *not* fired by *me*." As I ſaid this, I looked with a degree of compaſſion at the wretched man who I well knew was

conſcious of the act. His eye was inſtantly averted. "You have heard a man," continued I, "poſitively ſwear that I did fire it, what then will my denial of it avail me? I have ſome hope, however, that the jury will balance againſt this the equally poſitive manner in which he ſwore to my blowing out the candle, as alſo the point of view in which his character will be placed before the evidence is cloſed. My lord, I was the means of reſcuing that Murphy from a ſituation in which it is probable he would have periſhed, of his obtaining a good livelihood, the notice of many reſpectable families, and flattering proſpects: this I will prove; I am afraid that I ſhall not be ſo fortunate in eſtabliſhing the facts that gave birth to his inveteracy.

You ſee his figure: emerging from the ſeeming modeſty in which his poverty bound him, he ſuddenly appeared at Broke-Hall in this fantaſtical attire, with the addition of his neck enveloped in a coloured ſilk handkerchief. This is not all; I found among ſome ſongs for his ſcholar, the volume now in my attorney's hand. My lord, I thought I might venture to ridicule and adviſe him." Here Mr. Heartly handing up the poems, formerly mentioned, to the judge, Murphy was obſerved endeavouring to ſlink away, and Mr. Jones pointed it out to the ſheriff, who immediately called to him to come back, on which the judge ordered the officers to keep him in court, and then deſired me to pro-

 ceed.

ceed. "My lord, I did laugh at him, I did advife him, and I robbed him of his book. From that moment, he difmiffed all his gratitude, if ever he had any, and became infolent, fhamelefs, and malignant. He has perjured himfelf to gratify his revenge. He has perjured himfelf not only in ftating that Mr. Broke fell by my hand, but if I have been rightly informed, in ftating that the piftols produced to-day were thofe found in my hands on the fatal night. I was too much agitated to obferve them, but I underftand that it will be made to appear to your Lordfhip and the jury that thefe were not the piftols. On this circumftanee I place great hope: but in making my defence before a judge and a jury of fuch penetration perhaps the beft teftimony

timony I can adduce in my favour is that of nature and of confcience." I ftopped again fome moments, rivetting my eyes on Sir Nicholas, who looked determinedly another way. I then contined: "From the moment I was put to this bar, I have been endeavouring to catch the eye of my profecutor: I have endeavoured in vain, it has turned in every direction but on me. I now challenge it, my lord. Sir Nicholas Broke! if you know me to be the murderer of your fon, blaft me with a father's look." I paufed again: the poor confcious wretch made an effort to caft his eyes upon me, but their fight hung on the perfons in the middle of the court, and could not reach the bar at which I ftood, while his head, leaning to one fide,

ſide, bore the character of one of thoſe obſcene birds, that, gorged with carrion, look as if aſhamed of their filthy intemperance. "How merciful, my lord," ſaid I, "is this father, whoſe ſon I have murdered! Sir Nicholas! you and I both know by whoſe hand your ſon fell—it is alſo known, ſir, to God, who is as certainly preſent in this court as we are." I ſpoke emphatically, and from my ſoul. The ſelf-condemned villain, who had for ſome time obſerved that the ſenſe of the court and of the ſurrounding crowd was in my favour, unable longer to ſupport himſelf under the united oppreſſion of conſcience and the ſuſpicious looks that were darted upon him from every quarter, loſt his poize, ſunk into a ſwoon, and would have fallen forward,

forward, had he not been caught by his friends who were fitting by him.

The confufion which this created interrupted the trial. There was a general buz throughout the court: every one feemed eager to feize the opportunity of making his obfervations; the jury talked together in a knot; the counfel got up on their feats to fpeak to the judge; Jones fmiled and rubbed his hands. Having leifure to look round me, I caft my eyes up to the grand jury box, where I plainly perceived, though not in front, my amiable friend Mrs. Jones and her lovely daughter. This was a new excitement to my heart, my fpirits were already afloat, and the fmile I received from them both was

an earneſt to me of a complete triumph. Hoping that Jones's journey had been as ſucceſsful as I wiſhed it, I looked round the box for Miſs Nevill, but I could not ſee her. Sir Nicholas being carried out of the court under the charge of the ſheriff, who was deſired by the judge to detain him when recovered to give his evidence, ſilence was again proclaimed, and his lordſhip deſired me to proceed, obſerving that Sir Nicholas might be examined after the other witneſſes. On this I told his lordſhip that I had nothing to add, and that I ſhould leave the examination of the witneſſes to the gentlemen at the bar. I will not enter minutely into the account of this examination, which occupied a conſiderable time, and in which the

counſel

counſel diſplayed great ingenuity. Murphy was ſeverely handled by them, and ſo manifeſtly falſified his own evidence by his contradictions and inferences, that the judge ordered him to be indicted for perjury. Thomas's evidence was deciſive; the worthy fellow not only ſwore that the piſtols had been changed, but produced the right ones, which he acknowledged he had dared to go and take out of his maſter's apartment that morning, unknown to any one. Theſe piſtols being held up, ſtruck two gentlemen in court who had joined the party that came into my room, and on the recollection they immediately offered their teſtimony. Thomas's account of the frolics of the young lady who was found in my chamber, of which he

 ſpoke

ſpoke from his own knowledge, was equally ſatisfactory in reſpect to the purity of her character previous to my going to Broke-Hall. My innocence now became ſo manifeſt, that the counſel for the proſecution honourably declared his conviction of it, ſaying that he ſhould not aſk the jury for a verdict, unleſs his lordſhip thought it due to the priſoner. The jury did not wait his lordſhip's anſwer, nor to deliver their verdict by their foreman—not guilty, not guilty, was loudly and indignantly exclaimed by every man in the box, and echoed from every corner of the court.

My ſenſations may be eaſily imagined. Again every eye was upon me, till Jones was heard addreſſing the

the judge, when they were turned upon him, and a dead ſilence once more prevailed. The firſt words that ſtruck my ear were—" I charge him with murder, my lord, and on that charge I demand of your lordſhip that Sir Nicholas Broke be committed."—" Mr. Jones," ſaid the judge, " do not let the enthuſiaſm of your friendſhip cloud your reaſon. Be ſatisfied with the honourable proofs of Mr. Morland's innocence, and do not think that the dreadful event can ever in law be held murder againſt Sir Nicholas."—" No, my lord," replied Jones, " the crime with which I now charge him, is not the death of his ſon—I accuſe him, my lord, of the murder of Mr. Morland's father—I accuſe him of a premeditated deſign to murder, under colour

colour of the law, my noble friend now acquitted, the ſon of Sir Edward Broke, in order to ſecure himſelf in the poſſeſſion of the eſtates and honours, which he ſo infamouſly acquired, and which belong to the man whoſe life he has ſought, whoſe innocence and magnanimity your lordſhip has this day witneſſed." I will not pretend to deſcribe what I felt: indeed, ſtrong as my feelings were, I doubted whether they were real; I queſtioned whether they were not the effect of a romantic dream, reſulting from the impreſſion of the active ſcenes of the day. I gazed at Jones, and endeavoured to wake myſelf: but I did not believe my ſenſes till the words, *I am ſafe again*, uttered by Sir Nicholas in the chamber after he thought he had ſhot me, ruſhed

rufhed into my mind: fatisfied that *they* were not the effect of a dream, and recollecting his extraordinary conduct towards me, I faw a reafonable connexion between them and the affertions of my friend, and I liftened with awe and admiration to Jones, as he unfolded the providential difcovery that had been made. The aftonifhment and gratification of every perfon in court were vifibly painted on their faces: never was attention fo eager for information or fo pregnant with hope. "You amaze me indeed," faid the judge, "but I muft have fufficient grounds to proceed upon, before I can commit any man." — "I will immediately lay thofe grounds before your lordfhip," replied Jones; "I only requeft that I may accufe him to his face."

face."—"Let Sir Nicholas Broke be brought into court," ſaid the judge. As he entered, a murmur of indignation ran throughout the crowd. He hung his head: he never after held it up. "Sir Nicholas Broke," ſaid the judge, "you are accuſed by a gentleman of known honour and reſpectability, of the murder of your couſin Sir Edward Broke, and I have ſent for you that you may hear the grounds on which this accuſation is made. Go on, Mr. Jones."—"This," muttered Sir Nicholas, "is all a conſpiracy againſt my life, all revenge." —"My lord," ſaid Jones, "permit me to preface the grounds of my accuſation with a few words reſpecting my friend. I cannot but think that the interference of Providence in his caſe is very manifeſt, and I am proud

to

to ſay I believe no man ever deſerved it more. Unknown, and in adverſity, his good ſenſe, his feelings and his manners made an impreſſion on the mind of my father, that induced him to talk kindly and warmly of him, and I loved the man through ſuch praiſe before a ſeemingly accidental meeting eſtabliſhed a friendſhip between us. From that time I have had his heart open to hourly inſpection, and I conſider myſelf as the moſt fortunate of men in having engaged its eſteem. Had it not been for the breaking off of the trial by the indignation of the jury, I ſhould have teſtified his benevolence to the miſcreant whom your lordſhip's juſtice has devoted to the pillory, and I ſhould have ſpoken circumſtantially to virtues with which I am well acquainted;

acquainted; but I ſhall now content myſelf with this ſhort tribute of friendſhip, and proceed in developing to your lordſhip the ſhocking event that has hitherto buried my friend in obſcurity, and robbed him of his rights."—

The inſertion of this effuſion of Jones's, I fear, will have the appearance of vanity to a ſtranger, but it is to myſelf the moſt valuable paragraph in my hiſtory, and I cannot conſent to loſe it.

"My lord," continued Jones, "there is a lady in court, near your lordſhip, Mrs. Alton, who was applied to about a fortnight ago by the keeper of the jail, in behalf of a young woman of the name of Norman,

who was committed to priſon in a deranged ſtate of mind. She is an inhabitant of Overton, where Mrs. Alton has long reſided. Talking rationally at intervals, ſhe mentioned her knowledge of that lady, to whom the keeper's wife communicated the unhappy ſituation of the poor girl, who proved to have been a favourite of Mrs. Alton's, to whom her family is known. Mrs. Alton procured her diſcharge and took her home. For ſome time ſhe continued wild, having ſhort intervals of recollection. With proper care, ſhe recovered entirely. Having talked incoherently of a murder that was to be found out, of her William, and aſked for her dove, ſhe was queſtioned when it was thought ſafe, and being treated affectionately by Mrs. Alton,

unboſomed

unboſomed herſelf to that lady. She told her that her father was taken ill laſt ſpring, ſoon after Mrs. Alton left Overton, that for ſome time he had a hope of recovering, but at laſt his mind ſeemed very heavy, and nothing that he took did him good, ſo that he was given over: that when he was ſure he was dying, he was very unhappy, and called together her uncle Chriſtopher, her brother, and herſelf, to his bedſide, where he told them he was ſo miſerable that he could not bear the thoughts of death, and after crying, and praying God to forgive him, confeſſed that he had been employed by the preſent Sir Nicholas Broke to kill Sir Edward, his wife and infant ſon, who were returning home after Sir Edward had for many years been ſup-

poſed to be loſt at ſea; that he was Sir Nicholas's butler at the time, and was tempted by the great offer he had from him to commit the horrid deed: that nobody knew of Sir Edward's return, as he had written only to his father, ſuppoſing him to be ſtill alive, and the letters had fallen into the hands of the preſent baronet who had taken poſſeſſion of Broke-Hall: he told them that being ſent to meet the travellers at Portſmouth, as Sir Edward had requeſted, with money, he had contrived to take them ſeparately along the ſhore to an unfrequented ſpot where he had previouſly prepared a grave, in which having perpetrated the deed, he buried them. That having brought no ſervant and little baggage with them from Havre-de-grace, where they had em-

barked

barked, they had received no attention at the inn at which they put up, and were never enquired for by the people: he ſaid that he had been particularly charged to make away with the child, but that he was quite diſarmed by its ſmiles and its affectionate manner of clinging to him, which made him ſhed tears of remorſe for what he had done, and he reſolved to take care of the infant, then about a year old: that he accordingly ordered a chaiſe, ſaying that its parents had ſent him for it, and he left Portſmouth with the child and luggage without being ſuſpected, and travelled acroſs the country to Overton, where his brother was married and ſettled in a ſmall farm, with whom he left the little boy, giving him the name of Edward Morland, till he went back

back to ſatisfy Sir Nicholas, and receive his reward: that the baronet, for this ſervice, gave him the ſum of two thouſand five hundred pounds to buy a ſmall eſtate near his brother's farm, and ſettled two hundred a year upon him for his life: that he immediately married and reſided upon his own eſtate to farm it: that not being able to endure the ſight of the child whoſe parents he had murdered, he got his brother to carry him to a widow lady at Reading, who having no child of her own, was glad to take charge of him, both becauſe ſhe wiſhed for a child, and becauſe ſhe received an ample ſtipend for it annually: that in time loſing his wife and ſeveral children, he was viſited with ſevere compunctions which made him increaſe the ſum he paid

paid to the lady, whoſe name was Waller, on condition that the boy ſhould be brought up as a gentleman, and that ſhe ſhould never inform him or any body that ſhe was paid for taking care of him: he confeſſed that he had found among other things in Sir Edward's trunks, the certificate of his marriage, and another of the birth and baptiſm of his ſon, which he had kept more through a wicked motive than with any intention of doing juſtice, for he meant, if ever Sir Nicholas ſhould become ſlack in his payments to let him know they were preſerved: he owned that he was frightened at the ſame time at having them in his poſſeſſion, and that he had hid them in many different places, till at laſt a dove, which his wife was fond of,

meet-

meeting with an accident and dying, he had the bird preſerved, and, in the inſide of it concealed the certificates, which were ſtill there: that after this confeſſion he beſought them to make every reparation for him they could, by diſcloſing the circumſtances to young Morland, who was undoubtedly Sir Edward Broke; and that he then went into a fit of raving, and died.—My lord," continued Jones, reſuming his own direct information, "all this, which was ſtated to Mrs. Alton by the young woman, will be clearly proved. That lady immediately conſulted my father and Mr. Nevill, and knowing my friendſhip for Mr. Morland, did me the honour to admit me into the conſultation. The poor girl, Amy Norman, whoſe

communication I have ſtated, as well as her brother, whoſe name was *William*, was extremely affected by this dreadful confeſſion of a father. Chriſtopher Norman, their uncle, was alſo ſtruck with horror, and it was agreed among them that Mr. Morland ſhould be informed of the circumſtances that ſo eſſentially concerned him, but that the deceaſed ſhould firſt be buried. Having reflected on the conſequences of a diſcovery, the uncle changed his opinion; he ſhowed his nephew and niece that they would be reduced to beggary, beſides bringing infamy on the family; and argued that as the young man knew nothing of the matter it would be no loſs to him. William and Amy reluctantly ſubmitted to their uncle's reaſoning. The crime of

of the father preyed day and night on the hearts of the children: they were afraid to diſcloſe it, yet wretched in concealing it. William had no enjoyment in the property that was left to him, and Amy was aſhamed of the mourning ſhe wore. He took a reſolution to leave the farm to the management of his uncle, to come into Devonſhire, and admoniſh Sir Nicholas Broke to make an ample proviſion for Mr. Morland. He imparted his deſign to Amy: the thought gave her ſome relief, and ſhe approved of it. The preſerved dove, which had become a favourite of her's, after her mother's death, and which, ſtill in her poſſeſſion, contained the important teſtimonials of my friend's right of inheritance, was put into her brother's

trunk, to be at his command if he ſhould find it neceſſary. At the time he came to Exeter Sir Nicholas was at one of the family eſtates in another part of the kingdom. This is aſcertained both by his letters to his ſiſter, and by Mr. Rundle who knew him. The unhappy youth was ſeen wandering about the country: he would frequently go and lay himſelf along the ground beneath a linden-tree in Affington church-yard, on the very ſpot under which his remains have been ſince depoſited. My lord, he pined himſelf to death: and he died without informing his ſiſter of his danger, or the ſurgeon who attended him, Mr. Rundle, of his affairs, or even of his name. In his laſt letter to his ſiſter, however, he deſired her, if ſhe did not

not hear from him again, to inquire for him of Mr. Rundle; and on his death-bed he requested that gentleman to have the dove put into his coffin, and if a young woman of the name of Amy inquired for William, to assure her that it was in the grave with him. Her brother's absence, and the cessation of his correspondence affected Amy's brain, and she was confined for a considerable time. When she recovered some glimmerings of reason, her brother and her dove floated on her mind. She left Overton to come in search of them; she found her way in a stage-coach to Exeter, where for speaking incoherently, she was sent to jail. My lord, loving Mr. Morland as I do (I must still call him by that name) I entreated my father and my friends

to ſuffer me to take upon me the management of a diſcloſure that was to raiſe my friend to the ſtation to which he was not only entitled by law but by worth. On the intelligence given by Amy Norman the firſt ſtep taken was, with the ſanction of the biſhop of the dioceſe, to open the grave and coffin of her brother. Our moſt reverend prelate deemed the caſe worthy of his perſonal attendance. The dove was found and opened in his preſence, and in the preſence of ſeveral gentlemen known to your lordſhip: the certificates being taken out, were read aloud by me, and afterwards ſeparately by all preſent, and then given into the biſhop's cuſtody. Our next ſtep, my lord, was to ſecure the evidence of the uncle, and as Mrs. Alton knew

knew him well, ſhe and I ſet out together with the utmoſt expedition for Overton. This man did not appear to be ſenſible of the degree of his crime in concealing the ſhocking fact that had come to his knowledge. When he found it was known, he was not confounded, but told all he knew of it without heſitation, excuſing his conduct by ſaying that he thought it was better, after ſo long a time to let matters remain as they were, than to raiſe ſuch a terrible outcry as there would be againſt his brother. Uneaſy at the abſence of his nephew and the ſtate of his niece, he had actually gone over to Reading to ſee Mrs. Waller and Mr. Morland; but finding the former dead, and the latter gone from the country, he returned home confirmed in his ſilence

He very readily, however, conſented to teſtify the fact, and is now at hand as are all the witneſſes on this important occaſion. I now hope that your lordſhip is ſatisfied that there are grounds for committing Sir Nicholas Broke on the charge I have preferred."

The ſenſation produced in court by this ſpeech is beyond expreſſion. Jones was the object of a general admiration, which was reſtrained from breaking out into rapturous applauſe, only by a ſenſe of the ſolemnity of the place, and of the accuſation. "Is Chriſtopher Norman in court?" ſaid the judge. "I am he, my lord," anſwered a man among the crowd, whoſe face on his ſpeaking I remembered to have frequently

ſeen

ſeen at Mrs. Waller's, though he never took particular notice of me. He was ſworn: after which the judge ſaid to him: "You have heard what that gentleman has ſtated reſpecting the confeſſion of your brother William Norman, and the part you have yourſelf acted in the matter. Is it correctly ſtated?"—"My lord, I am ſorry to ſay it is all too true."—"Look at Mr. Morland: is he the perſon whom your brother brought an infant to your houſe?"—"He is my lord: I carried him myſelf to Mrs. Waller, and I have not miſſed ſeeing him twice every year ſince, when I went to Reading with the half-yearly payments for him." The judge then aſked the biſhop if he was ſatisfied with the teſtimonials in his hands. "I am, my lord," re-

plied the prelate; "they have every mark of authenticity. They confist of a licence figned by his Majefty's ambaffador at Conftantinople, for the marriage of Edward Broke and Matilda Maitland, to which is annexed a certificate of the celebration of it, figned by the chaplain, and another certificate of the birth and baptifm of their infant fon. The chaplain who figned thefe papers is now a dignitary of the church, and I am well acquainted with him."—"It is quite fufficient, my lord," faid the judge; "yet there is an obfcurity in the long abfence of Sir Edward Broke, and his remaining abroad when he fhould have been at home: but that will be for future confideration." He then turned to the accufed wretch, who ftood motionlefs at a little diftance from

from him, petrified into a ſtupid amazement, and ſaid: " Sir Nicholas Broke, I am not ſurpriſed at the appearance you make; but it is not for me to anticipate your condemnation: my duty is to have you ſecured, that your guilt or innocence may be eſtabliſhed by a jury of your country." Confounded and unnerved, the miſerable creature made no attempt to reply, but ſuffered himſelf to be led away like a brute, ſtunned and indifferent to its fate.

The court breaking up, I haſtened to join Jones and my friends, from whom I had previouſly received many congratulatory ſignals. Mrs. Jones gave me an affectionate nod from the jury box; Miſs Jones bowed ſweetly. I was introduced by Mr.

Jones to the judge, who gave me joy of the events of the day. Mrs. Alton ſhook me by the hand. The curate of Reading ſmoothed his brow, and giving me a hearty ſqueeze, ſaid he was inclined to think that there was ſome juſtice ſtill remaining in the world. The counſel for the proſecution vied with thoſe on my ſide in their compliments, and wherever my eyes turned they were met with ſmiles. It was ſome time before the court was cleared, and when I accompanied Jones out, I was received with ſhouts and huzzas by all ranks, my trial having excited a very general expectation and intereſt. Mr. Jones's poſt-chaiſe being in waiting, Jones made me get into it, ſaying that the family would return home in the coach. We ſtopped at the jail

jail to take up my trunk, and in the courſe of half an hour I was in Affington-Houſe, where I was ſoon ſurrounded by a band of noble friends. I was preſented to the biſhop, who had been invited to dinner; and I was introduced to the Nevill family, to the Colonel, Clara, Tom, and Anne, moſt of whom had been in court, though I knew them not. If I was overjoyed, if I was happy, I was not forgetful of the great ruler of events; I was not ungrateful to the hand that had led me to happineſs: the thought of the interpoſition of Providence accompanied every enjoyment, and the elation of my ſpirits was rendered ſweeter to me by the reflection, that the giver of life was alſo the diſpoſer of it.

CHAP. XXVI.

Which may be omitted by thoſe great and learned Critics who cannot ſuffer the preceding Chapter to eſcape their rod.

THERE was yet much wanting to complete my felicity. Till Jones was happy, ſorrow could not but have a ſhare in my heart, and the thought of the fate of my parents for a long time diſturbed many of the hours allotted to repoſe. From the moment of my leaving the court, Mr. Jones and all his friends, ſatisfied of my right, treated me in every reſpect as the legal owner of the eſtates which were ſtill in poſſeſſion of the murderer of my father, and would have given me the title annexed to them,

them, had I not objected to receiving it before my right was formally recognized in a court of law, till which I joyfully accepted a room at Affington-Houſe. During the latter part of the joyous day that reſtored me to a knowledge of my birth, the thoughts of my proſperity frequently gave place to my anxiety for the fate of Jones. After we roſe from table, I went to ſingle out Mr. Nevill, truſting that his converſation might give riſe to a hope of his adding his influence in favour of my friend. Indeed he ſeemed to ſingle me out. His countenance was pale, his nerves unſtrung. "Sir," ſaid I, "in ſpite of the ſudden ſtream of proſperity that flows upon me, I feel, even in the midſt of the moſt cheering ſmiles ever beſtowed on man, that I cannot be

be happy, while he who has been ſo active an inſtrument in the promotion of my welfare, is doomed to paſs a life uncheered by thoſe ſmiles in which he has fixed his happineſs." —"My dear young friend," ſaid Mr. Nevill, with a faint, but impreſſive ſmile, "I have been a broken-hearted man for many, many months: I had given up all hope of ever being thoroughly myſelf again, but I think I ſhall date my reſtoration from this day: it is my holiday as well as yours. My child, after reſiſting all the arguments of Mrs. Alton, enforced by thoſe of our friend the biſhop, yielded to the tears of her father. Gently," exclaimed he, ſeeing me ready to burſt into rapture, "gently, or you will diminiſh your own enjoyment. Your friend

friend concealed the happy turn of your affairs, in order this day to increaſe your pleaſure by ſurpriſe: you ſhall repay his friendſhip by a ſimilar ſurpriſe. It is contrived for you. We are all here but as one family. The biſhop and my ſon are at this moment on their way to the Hut to bring the Altons over, and you ſhall have the ſatisfaction of preſenting Miſs Alton to your friend."

The pleaſure I had felt in the former part of the day was indeed great, but I can truly ſay, that the pleaſure which theſe words of Mr. Nevill gave me was ſtill more lively; I could hardly reſtrain my joy; I would fain have imparted it immediately to Jones, but Mr. Nevill preventing me; I kept my eyes upon my friend, anticipating his delight, while

while I avoided ſpeaking to him till I maſtered my emotion. I then drew him aſide, and after repeating my ſenſe of the part he had taken, and acknowledging the effect of the ſurpriſe he had prepared for me, I led to that which was prepared for him, by ſaying, that my felicity would have been complete had Sophia been preſent. "I have kept her all day as much as poſſible from my thoughts," replied he, "that I might enjoy your triumph unabated, but I confeſs ſhe has, notwithſtanding, ſtolen ſeveral times into my mind: no wonder, Morland, for ſhe is always in my heart. Cruel, cruel Sophia! ſhe can return to Ex-Mount, ſhe can bleſs her family with her ſociety; to me only is ſhe cruel: but we will not talk of her t-day."—"We will, we muſt

muſt talk of her," cried I, "and we will and muſt talk to her too, till we convince her that her perſeverance, far from being a religious duty, deprives virtue of a triumph due to it." I continued talking with him till the re-appearance of the biſhop and Colonel Nevill convinced me that the Altons were in the houſe. The former coming up to us, entered into converſation with Jones, while the latter gave me an intelligible nod, on which I withdrew.

In the hall I met Mr. Nevill, who told me that my friends of the Hut were in Mr. Jones's library; "I ſhall go," ſaid he, "and introduce you to Sophia, and then Mrs. Alton and I will leave you to preſent her to your friend."—"You are determined,

mined, Sir," ſaid I, "to unite in ſhowering bleſſings upon me, and none that I have received is equal to this." He then led me to the library where we found his daughter, elegantly dreſſed, in company with her two mothers. Having reſolved to comply with her father's wiſh, ſhe was far ſuperior to the affectation of ſuffering her appearance to contradict her compliance; her perſon was adorned with her former taſte, and her countenance had reſumed the impreſſive cheerfulneſs of conſcious rectitude. I was dazzled with her beauty. She ſmiled as her father preſented me, and ſaid that ſhe was happy in being able to heighten the enjoyments of the day. "Your friend, Sir," added ſhe, "deſerves to be happy, and ſince he perſiſts

ſiſts in placing his happineſs on my paſſing my life with him, ſince it is the wiſh of both our families, and ſince wiſer heads and better minds than mine have directed me on this occaſion, I enter freely and unreſervedly into this little conſpiracy of our friends to ſurpriſe him into what they are pleaſed to call a reward for his ſurpriſing you ſo happily." —"The ſurpriſe of the evening, my dear Madam," replied I, "is ſtill more precious than that of the morning. Let me not delay it a moment. Shall I bring Jones directly?" I ſtood in a poſture ready to fly for him, when Mrs. Alton caught me by the hand and ſaid: "take Mrs. Nevill and me with you." Mr. Nevill accompanied them, and going into another apartment gave me an oppor-

opportunity of conducting Jones acroſs the hall without his ſeeing them. When I returned to the company he was ſtill in converſation with the biſhop, who, on my joining them, left us to make an anſwer to a queſtion purpoſely put to him by Mrs. Jones.

I took my friend by the arm, and leading him to the door, ſaid; "how frequently, Jones, does it happen that the moſt ſtriking and happy events of a man's life take place when leaſt expected, when all hope is relinquiſhed: but the chain that is obſcure to us is viſible to providence. How entirely had I relinquiſhed all hope of tracing a family; how little did I yeſterday think of the flattering occurrences of to-day? Cheer

up,

up, cheer up, my friend; who knows but another morning may bleſs you with the yielding ſmiles of your Sophia."—"I will not talk of Sophia to-night," ſaid Jones, "why ſhould I damp the joy you muſt feel by telling you that I have now relinquiſhed every hope?"—"You do not damp my joy," cried I, "this dereliction of hope is the threſhold of your bliſs: was it not mine?"—"Hear me, then," ſaid he, "ſince you will talk of Sophia. She has for ſome time paſt gone frequently to Ex-Mount, where her conduct has convinced me that her reſolution is not to be ſhaken; judge when I tell you that my mother aſſured me ſhe has been endeavouring to prevail on Clara to win my affections, though the dear girl declared that ſhe could

only think of me with the regard of a ſiſter: deſpair, bitter deſpair is my portion, my dear Morland; but once more I entreat you let us reſolve to drop the ſubject, at leaſt for to-night." Saying this, he preſſed one of my hands, while with the other I opened the door and drew him into the hall. "To-night!" replied I, "I gave Fortune till to-morrow to complete her operations; but as you ſo abſolutely deſpair, ſhe muſt really perform her taſk to-night." Jones looked at me as if to aſcertain whether I had not taken more champagne than was conſiſtent with his deſpair. "Yes, Jones, yes," cried I, in a rapture of joy, "I am dazzled with the beauty of your miſtreſs—" He now gazed at me with amazement—"but," continued I, "it is neither

neither Broke-Hall nor the bottle that inflames me—come, my friend, and drink of the cordial that has flown up to my brain." Jones, as he afterwards told me, having never before ſeen me ſo elevated, really attributed my ſpirits to libations to which I was unaccuſtomed; but, when caſting open the door of the library, I preſented Sophia to his view, Sophia, once more herſelf, the Sophia of Ex-Mount, his intoxication exceeded mine. He flew forward, exclaiming; "do my eyes deceive me?"—"I leave you," ſaid I, "to diſcover whether that ſmile be an indication of cruelty, or of tenderneſs: when you have determined the point, come and ſhare your feelings with thoſe to whom you are both ſo dear."

It would be an unneceſſary, perhaps tedious, prolongation of theſe memoirs to deſcribe circumſtantially feelings and occurrences obvious to anticipation: ſuffice it to ſay that Jones ſoon returned to his friends, completing the joy of the day by bringing with him the lovely miſtreſs of his heart. We all preſſed around them with congratulations; every embrace Sophia received gave me freſh pleaſure, but my delight was inexpreſſible when I ſaw her in the arms of Louiſa Jones, to whom I once more dared to raiſe my thoughts. Yes, I hoped again; yet I ſtill hoped prudently. It was true my proſpects were brilliant, but I had to reach the objects they preſented. Sir Nicholas was ſtill the maſter of Broke-Hall, and I reſolved not to breathe a ſyllable of my paſ-

ſion

ſion till my fate was completely decided: a reſolution I managed, with ſome difficulty, to keep literally, while in reality it was broken again and again the very day I took it; my anxiety to ſecure my chair at table next to her, my aſſiduities in the evening, in ſhort every look and motion betraying the paſſion ſhe had inſpired. It was not long, however, before my ſelf impoſed reſtriction was removed. From the moment Sir Nicholas was committed he never opened his lips either to utter a word or to admit ſuſtenance. A univerſal ſtupor pervaded his frame, leaving him without the power either of remorſe or repentance on the one hand, or of a ſtruggle to defend his crimes on the other; he died in jail on the fourth day of his confinement, a dread-

ful example, among the many inſtances that have occurred, of the decided interference of Providence, even in this life, againſt the murderer. My birth and title were not left to depend merely upon the certificates which had been preſerved by the father of Amy: Lord Powis, formerly the Honourable William Dalſton, ambaſſador at the Porte, and the Rev. James Grainger, his chaplain, now a canon of Windſor, teſtified perſonally my father's marriage and my birth.

It appeared that my father had been ſhipwrecked on the northern coaſt of Africa, where, ſaving himſelf by ſwimming, he had been ſeized by ſome of the Moors and kept in a ſtate of ſlavery, from which, after a captivity of four years, he had eſ-

caped in an Engliſh veſſel bound to the Levant. Arriving at Conſtantinople, he made his caſe known to the ambaſſador, who ſupplied him with money till he ſhould hear from home; in the mean time he joined Mr. Maitland, a gentleman of eccentric character who had been travelling with his daughter over the claſſic ground of Greece; and who was accidentally killed in an excurſion up the Boſphorus. He then returned with Miſs Maitland to Conſtantinople, where they were ſhortly afterwards married. The credit Mr. Maitland had eſtabliſhed died with him, but the funds left by that gentleman in the poſſeſſion of his daughter were ſufficient to enable the married pair, after repaying the advance received by my father of the ambaſſador, to purſue a taſte they had both

imbibed for visiting regions, rendered precious to their imagination by early reading. They returned to the capital of Turkey, when I was about to make my appearance on the grand theatre of life, into which I was soon after ushered. Disappointed in his expectation of letters and remittances from my grandfather, my father again wrote, taking the precaution to send a duplicate of his letters with the ambassador's dispatches. Eight months more elapsing without his receiving any answer he began to be alarmed, finding that the money he had received with my mother was rapidly decreasing, and after loitering two months more in hope of letters, either from his family or from hers, they resolved to set out with the remainder of their funds, which with economy might

carry

carry them across the continent. My mother had written to her uncle and other relations, but unfortunately her letters had been enclosed in the dispatches to my grandfather, and had of course fallen into the hands of Sir Nicholas.

Their surprise at the silence of their friends, and these circumstances in general were perfectly remembered by Lord Powis and Mr. Grainger, who had also some faint recollection of a report of their being lost in crossing the channel, but it was not much talked of. Such testimonies, with the figure which Sir Nicholas, conscience-struck, had made in court before Judge Boteler, were sufficient to convince even the adherents of that wretched man. I may add, however, as collateral proofs,

that in the trunks preſerved by Norman were ſome ſhort notes from my father to my mother, ſealed with the Broke-arms, and ſeveral trinkets belonging to the latter, which were recognized by her couſins, who vied with each other in acknowledging me as the ſon of Matilda. To complete conviction, a ſtrong reſemblance of my perſon and features to thoſe of my grandfather, were obſerved by many perſons who well remembered him. In the courſe of the winter, my pretenſions were fully eſtabliſhed, and I was regularly put into poſſeſſion of Broke-Hall in the ſpring. It would be indelicate in me to paint my own courtſhip, and the gradual condeſcenſion of my Louiſa. There was nothing romantic in it to intereſt a ſtranger; no diſtreſs, no obſtacle, no jealouſy, no duel: ſhe thought

thought me worthy of her love, and ſhe pledged it with her hand. Jones and Sophia took the ſtart of us, they were united before Chriſtmas; it was in the month of June in the enſuing year, that I led my Louiſa to the altar, followed by a hoſt of kind and happy friends, among whom were the amiable Rundle, and Mr. Scot, formerly curate of Reading, now a prebend of Exeter cathedral. Broke-Hall was open for many weeks, and if *my* Lady Broke had not preciſely the taſte of her predeceſſor, ſhe was at leaſt more eſteemed and more beloved.

And here I ſhould cloſe theſe memoirs, but that it behoves me to ſatisfy that curioſity which I may have excited, reſpecting the fate of ſeveral

ſeveral perſons who have been mentioned in them. Foremoſt then, my patron the Vicar of Holcomb, who ſent me a conciliatory meſſage by Mr. Scot, the day after my trial, lives on his vicarage, alternately breaking out in ſudden rage and perſuading himſelf that he has conquered his paſſions; reſolving and re-reſolving, ready to quarrel and ready to be friends. He likes a good dinner, and often finds one at Broke-Hall, from which I hope no teſty fit will eſtrange him, as I ſincerely forgive his believing his old friend Sir Nick in preference to me when I was thrown into jail. Murphy, after ſtanding in the pillory on a conviction of perjury, fled the country, but has ſince returned to Andover, where he again fiddles at the Spread Eagle.

Eagle. Mrs. Nicholas Broke has retired to an ornamented cottage in the Isle of Wight on five hundred a-year, which I settled upon her for her life, on her forgiving her daughter, to whom I promised a fortune of ten thousand pounds, whenever her conduct should be such as to attract the regard of a man of sense who would make her his wife; in consequence of which she was married six weeks after to Mr. Dalby, for I did not insist much on my proposed terms, and I am told they live very happily with their mother, who is still fond of her son's poetry. Flora, Iris, and Urania, turned actresses, and joined the Exeter company. Radley, my Hermitage friend, on hearing of his master's commitment, broke open his escrutoire, and robbing

bing it of all it contained, to the amount of ſome hundreds, eſcaped ſafe to Briſtol, where he embarked for America. As Jones, though he forgave, could never like Hewſon, Mr. Jones obtained a place in the exciſe for him. Amy Norman married a young man to whom ſhe was attached previous to the diſcovery which proved fatal to her brother William and diſtracted her for a time, and they are ſettled at Overton. Thomas, my faithful Thomas, preferred living with me as my chief perſonal ſervant, to a profitable poſt which I offered him; but he is amply provided for, and I ſhould have been ſorry to loſe him.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.